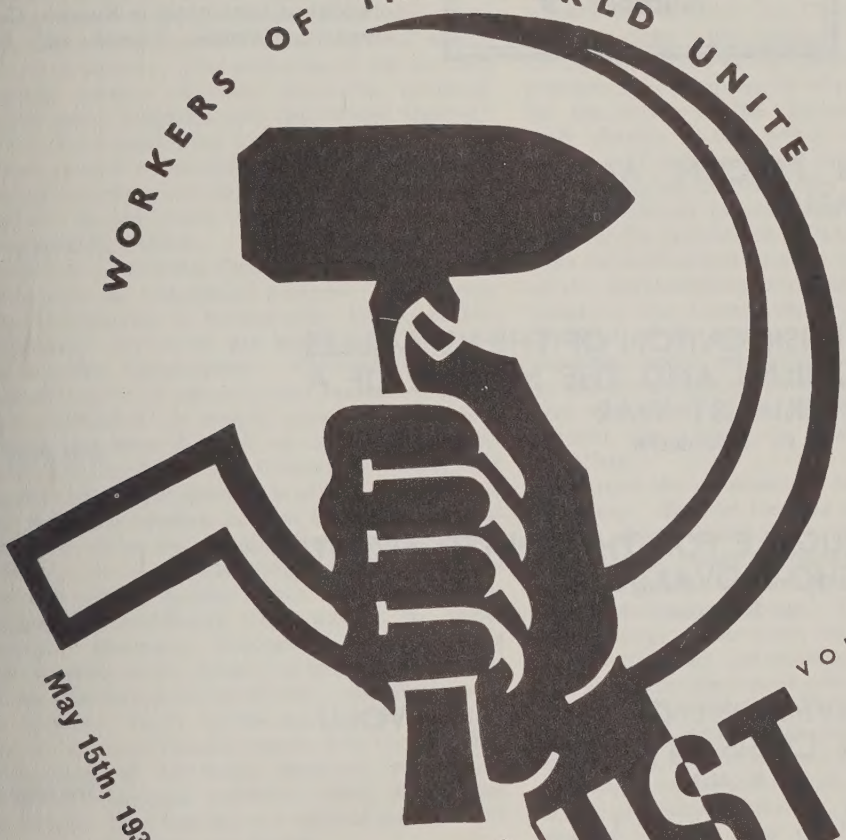

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GERMAN FASCISM AND THE GERMAN PROLETARIAT

THE Fascists have been ruling in Germany for over two months. The most extreme party of the German bourgeoisie—the "national socialists"—is in power. The inclusion of the German bourgeois armies of civil war—the national-socialist storm brigades and the "Steel Helmet" —in the State apparatus has made it possible for the bourgeoisie to establish a régime of bestial terror against the working class. The proletariat, weakened by the policy of the social-democrats, was forced to retreat. Tens of thousands of proletarians have been thrown into prison. The Communists are considered outlaws. The power of the bourgeoisie is temporarily made stable. But poverty and want are assuming more and more horrible dimensions. Contradictions are accumulating to a catastrophic extent. Not a single political or economic question of modern Germany has been decided, or can be decided by Fascist dictatorship. The Communist Party, the vanguard of the proletariat, is at its militant post. They have not shaken it, nor been able to disorganise it, either by arresting its leader, Comrade *Thälmann,* or by provocations, closing down its press and acts of bestial terror against its members. It is mobilising the masses to resist Fascism. Germany remains, as before, the weakest chain in the system of imperialist States, and the junction-point of all the contradictions of this system. There exists no Fascist dictatorship, no terror of Fascist bands, that can stop the development of Germany towards proletarian revolution. German questions now, more than ever before, have become the central questions of the world proletarian revolution.

In this connection the resolution of the E.C.C.I. Presidium on the report of Comrade *Heckert** on the situation in Germany is of very great importance for the German, and for the whole world revolutionary movement. It gives the German and the world proletariat a clear, concise analysis of the causes which led to the establishment of Fascist dictatorship in Germany. It gives a clear, concise perspective, on the basis of Marxism, of the inevitability of a further rise in the tide of revolution and of the approach of proletarian revolutionary in Germany. It is of decisive importance for the whole tactics of the Communist International in capitalist countries.

The establishment of the fact that the "institution of Fascist dictatorship in Germany is a consequence of the social-democratic policy of collaboration with the bourgeoisie during the whole of the existence of the Weimar Republic," its "policy of cruel repressions against the revolutionary movement," its "line of splitting the working class," put through by social-democracy during the whole of the period since 1914 to the present day—is primarily of enormous importance for the whole of the international proletariat. Only thanks to this policy of social-democracy, which split and weakened the German proletariat, and entangled the majority of the proletariat (which believed in social-democracy) in the network of its centralised organisations, was it possible for a situation to arise where "the vanguard of the revolutionary wing of the German proletariat — the Communist Party — found itself deprived of the support of the majority of the working class", and where the proletariat, split by social-democracy, found itself too weak to offer firm resistance to the Fascist offensive and to prevent the advent to power of the national-socialists.

In 1918 the proletarian revolution began in Germany. But the German proletariat lacked one factor which would have ensured victory: an experienced, mass, Communist Party, which would organise the struggle and the victory of the revolutionary masses. The Communist Party of Germany, at that time, was only just organised, was young and inexperienced, not well known and very little connected with the masses, and was not in a position to get the working masses away from the old mass social-democratic party, which had not yet lost its authority.

German social-democracy, which the majority of the proletariat followed, already at the beginning of the war went wholly to the side of the bourgeoisie. Instead of leading the revolution forward to proletarian dictatorship and socialism, it allied itself with the bourgeoisie and the Kaiser's generals and smashed the uprising of the revolutionary masses. Without the direct assistance of social-democracy, without the Scheidemanns, Noskes, Eberts and Severings, the bourgeoisie would have been helpless against the revolution. But even after it has smashed the open uprising of the German proletariat, the bourgeoisie was not sufficiently strong to swing the country back to the pre-revolutionary situation. Under pressure from the working masses (revolution), the bourgeoisie was compelled to extend its labour legislation, to introduce social insurance for workers, to give them considerable democratic rights, and to rule on the basis of parliamentarianism and with the help of social-democracy.

But political democracy *contradicts* the system of monopolist capitalism, whose political expres-

* Resolution published in No. 8. Report will be issued in No. 10 and in pamphlet form.

sion is reaction and violence both in home and foreign politics. This is more so in a country whose capitalism is deeply undermined by the general crisis, in the country which suffered defeat in the imperialist war. The Weimar Republic, despite its democratic constitution, could be no other than a counter-revolutionary bourgeois dictatorship, as a republic that was becoming fascist.

During the November revolution in 1918 social-democracy was able to smash the proletarian offensive against the bourgeoisie and to limit the revolution to the task of removing the Junkers—the allies of the bourgeoisie—from direct rule. Reactionary bourgeois dictatorship began to be established with the support of social-democracy and with its direct participation in the government. Social-democracy invented the theory of class collaboration and coalition governments, as governments of the transition period from capitalism to socialism, in order to maintain their influence among the masses, while setting up counter-revolutionary bourgeois dictatorship. Behind the tactic of the "lesser evil," social-democracy, to this day, has been smashing up the revolutionary movement by deepening the split in the working class. Step by step it has taken away one revolutionary victory of the working class after another.

Its Müllers persecuted the Communist Party in 1919, its Eberts prohibited the Communist Party in 1923, its Severings prohibited the Red Front Fighters' Union, while allowing the national-socialist storm troops to organise freely. Its Zorgiebels opened fire on the May-Day demonstration in 1929, its Lieparts, Grassmans Husemanns, Urichs and Missels betrayed the political strikes in 1928, 1930 and 1931 in the Ruhr, in 1931 in Berlin and Mansfeld and other parts, its Eggerschietts and Schönfelders shot down the Altona workers in the summer of 1932, thus directly paving the way for the coup d'état of July 20th, organised by Von Papen against the social-democratic Prussian government.

Social-democracy, with the other parties of the Weimar coalition, allowed the victor countries to enslave Germany; social-democracy signed the burdensome Versailles agreement. Of course, for parties and governments whose aim was to smash up the working class, this was the only possible road. It would have been possible to avoid the Versailles enslavement only by not fearing to take the road to socialism, by organising a mass uprising, by rousing the toilers to a real revolutionary war against its oppressors, by relying on the growing revolutionary movement in countries which had been at war with Germany and in their armies; it would have been possible to avoid the Versailles enslavement only in close alliance with the first proletarian dictatorship in the U.S.S.R., by uniting all the forces of the German and international proletariat.

But because of its whole class nature, the Weimar coalition and its main party — social-democracy—was unable to do this. *Only the revolutionary workers' and peasants' government, only the dictatorship of the proletariat would have been capable of fighting against Versailles.* Reactionary bourgeois dictatorship, supported and established by social-democracy, could only put through a policy of obeying the dictates of the victor countries and carrying out the Versailles agreement.

The Versailles system robbed Germany and placed the German toiling masses under the yoke of insufferable exploitation, not only of their own capitalists, but of foreign capitalists to whom the German government had to pay reparations. This brought about an enormous lowering of the standard of living of the German proletariat and led to a mighty wave of revolution. It also led to insufferable poverty on the part of the peasantry and the urban petty-bourgeoisie.

The dissatisfied urban petty-bourgeoisie and the broad masses of toiling peasants would have followed the proletariat, had the latter launched out with a broad and successful struggle against the offensive of capital and fascism. But in so far as the social-democracy betrayed all the militant actions of the proletariat by using the centralised system of proletarian mass organisations under its control for this purpose, and in so far as the petty-bourgeoisie and the peasantry did not consider the proletariat to be their leader in the revolutionary struggle against capital and fascism, there was a terrible growth of poverty, want and starvation which led to part of the ruined petty-bourgeoisie and peasantry beginning to regard pre-war Germany, where there was no general crisis of capitalism and no impoverishment of the masses as to-day, as their ideal.

The wavering petty-bourgeois masses, in order to get rid of the insufferable yoke of the Weimar Republic, swung over to the side of Fascism, which promised them to make Germany a Great Power and to restore the mighty "Third Empire." Under the banner of restoration of Germany's imperialist might and the resurrection of the traditions of Friedrich the Great and Friedrich Wilhelm I., entrusted in 1813 with the fight against the Napoleon yoke and the disgraceful Tilsit Peace, by means of demagogy and trickery, the national-socialists were able to awaken bestial nationalism and chauvinism and to arouse considerable masses against the Weimar Republic. On the wave of nationalism and chauvinism,

hich was a consequence of the Versailles system d the policy of social-democracy, the national-cialist party grew and raised itself to power. There could be only one means against this growth nationalism and chauvinism—a closely united ruggle on the part of the *whole* of the proletariat ainst the offensive of capital and fascism, which ould lead the toilers and indicate the revolu-nary way out of the crisis, poverty, want, and e Versailles yoke.

Faced with acts of treachery on the part of cial-democracy, the Communists organised the nguard of the working class. They fought in e interests of the whole proletariat against the pitalist attack on wages and unemployment lief. They alone fought against the gradual quidation of all the democratic rights of the orking class and against the fascist offensive. order to offer successful resistance to the capi-list offensive and fascism, they formed a united ont of struggle with the social-democratic orkers and dozens of times made offers of a nited front with social-democratic organisations. ut the social-democratic workers en masse con-nued to follow their own leaders. The leaders social-democracy declared, more than once, that was better to go with the Kaiser's generals than ith the Communists. Wherever, in opposition the social-democratic leadership, a united front as made from below, social-democracy under-ined it with the help of its central organisations. he Communists fought against the *reactionary nited front* from Brandler and Wels to Hinden-urg and Hitler, unmasking the social-democratic olicy of collaboration with the bourgeoisie and s policy of the "lesser evil," as policies which imed at setting up fascist dictatorship. But the ajority of the working class is still attached to cial-democratic organisations and cannot yet ecide to break with social-democracy. For a ng period of time the Communists have been minding the workers that it was they them-lves who overthrew the *Cunow* government with general strike. They have been advocating the eneral strike as a weapon of struggle against eaction and fascism. On July 20th, when the ascists drove out the social-democratic Prussian overnment, although all the government appara-us in three-quarters of Germany was still in the ands of social-democracy, the Communists called r a *general strike* and made a united front roposal to social-democracy. But social-demo-racy turned down the Communists' proposal, pre-ented the workers from struggling through their ystem of organisation, and smashed the general trike. On January 30th, when the national-ocialists came to power, the Communists once nore called for a *general strike* and proposed a united front to the social-democrats. A general strike of the whole working class, in spite of the fact that the State apparatus had already been consolidated, might have prevented the victory of fascism. But social-democracy turned down this strike as well. Thus all the attempts of the working class to prevent the victory of the fascists by revolutionary activities were crushed by the social-democrats. The revolutionary vanguard, representing the minority of the working class, could not, of course, put through the strike without the support of the great masses who still support social-democracy.

Social-democracy did not want to fight against fascism. Moreover, it made systematic preparations for the advent to power of Hitler. In 1931 and the beginning of 1932 the "Vorwaerts" wrote that if the national-socialists come to power by constitutional means, then social-democracy *can have nothing against it.* The more so if the national-socialists go into coalition with another party. In the spring of 1932 "Vorwaerts" made a proposal that portfolios be given to the national-socialists. And lastly, on February 3rd, 1933, to crown their whole line, "Vorwaerts" declared that it had become possible for a man of "proletarian" origin like Hitler to become Reichskanzler only thanks to the November revolution in 1918 and thanks to the social-democrats.

The fascist coup d'état in Germany could come about, and actually did come about as the Communists always foretold, only with the direct assistance of social-democracy, pursuing its policy of a split in the ranks of the proletariat and the destruction of the revolutionary wing.

The Communists were attacked because they consider social-democracy to be the chief enemy in the ranks of the working class and the main social support of the bourgeoisie. Now, when social-democracy has crushed all resistance and handed the workers neck and crop over to fascism, it should be obvious that the Communists were right. The Communists were accused of violating the unity of the trade unions, because, in fighting against the course adopted in the trade unions by the social-democratic leaders, they created a revolutionary trade union opposition inside the trade unions. Now, when the reformist trade unions have decamped with flying colours into the camp of fascism, it should be clear to all that the only correct trade union policy was that of creating a revolutionary trade union opposition which would fight consistently against the offensive of capital and fascism. The Communists were accused of wrongfully calling the social-democrats social-fascists. But now, when social-democracy has openly taken the side of the

fascists, it is clear that here again the Communists were absolutely right.

But fascist dictatorship can only hold out with the direct support of social democracy and the reformist trade unions, who, on behalf of fascism, are destroying even the reformist working-class organisations by subjecting them wholly to fascist dictatorship.

The social-democratic trade union leaders, the Lieparts, Grossmans, Huesemans and Urichs, who in the interests of collaboration with the bourgeoisie previously betrayed the strikes against wage-cuts, are now declaring that they are *prepared to collaborate* with fascist dictatorship and with the fascist organisations of the owners on questions concerning wages and hours. They have declared that they *welcome* national-socialist control of the trade unions, that they are not demanding a monopoly in representing the interests of the workers, and thus they have recognised the right of the national-socialist workshop organisations to conclude tariffs agreements, and put through cuts in wages in the name of the workers. The social-democratic trade union leaders have declared themselves independent of all political parties, in order thus to emphasise their *direct subjection to the fascist state.* In several localities they have even begun to dissolve their own trade union organisations in order to give freedom of action to the "national-socialist" workshop organisations.

Otto Wels, the leader of German social-democracy, declared in his speech in the Reichstag that social-democracy, in accordance with the main points in Hitler's programme, even asked permission to be allowed to exist as the legal opposition to the fascist government. *Karl Kautsky* in his article called upon social-democracy to work together with the fascist state. Social-democracy, as a party, has capitulated entirely to fascist dictatorship and entered the so-called "national front." Only a social-Hitlerite like *Trotsky* can talk about the insuperable contradictions between "democratic" social-democracy and the dictatorial national-socialists.

The national-socialists' advent to power signifies an intensification of all the contradictions among the imperialists. Fascist dictatorship will try to maintain its influence upon the masses by means of an *adventurous foreign policy.* It will try to organise national-socialist activities in Austria, in the Memel district, in German Bohemia, in the Saar, etc. In circumstances where the government is antagonising its relations with almost all states quite indiscriminately, all this can maintain chauvinism, but can bring no serious successes to German foreign policy. All this leads merely to a further sharpening of the international situation in Europe and to a furthe increase in the war danger. Every national social democratic party is hastening to take the side o its bourgeoisie. This has already led to the resig nation of *Wels* from the Executive Committee o the Second International. Wels' resignation a the same time means that German social-demo cracy has left the Second International, and tha there is a new split in it. The betrayal of Germa social-democracy now is much greater than th betrayal on August 4th, 1914. Now social democracy is denying even its own democratic reformist principles and has taken up the positio of support in the *fascist* state.

The advent of the "national-socialists" t power in Germany and the capitulation of Germa social-democracy to fascism is at the same tim a serious warning to the workers of all countrie who still follow social-democracy. The tactic o the so-called "lesser evil," the policy of routin the revolutionary wing and splitting the workin class was, and is, the policy of all social-demo cratic parties. These parties propose a "unite front" to the Communists, but they have not th slightest intention of fighting, and are maintainin their reactionary united front with the bourgeoisie If the social-democrats of certain countries, whil maintaining their reactionary united front wit the bourgeoisie, "criticise" German social democracy, they are doing so only in the interest of their own bourgeoisie. Actually the social democrats in France, Belgium, England, Austri and so on are doing just the same thing as th German social-democrats have done. Did no *Otto Bauer* betray the strike of the printer against the introduction of preliminary censor ship? Was it not the social-democrats who gav instructions that their schutzbund should disarm by order of the Dollfus fascist government? Di not the *Czech* social-democrats put through th dictatorial legislation of the Malineira govern ment, did it not prohibit revolutionary organisa tions and shoot down workers' demonstrations Did not the *Danish* social-democratic governmen of Stauning refuse to allow the convention of a anti-fascist congress in Copenhagen? Did no *Danish* social-democracy when in power persecut the Communists and split the revolutionary work ing-class organisations?

The tactics and policy of German social-demo cracy was not the policy of German social-demo cracy *alone,* but was, and still remains, the polic of the Second International. Social-democrac *in every other* country will inevitably follow o the heels of German social-democracy to suit th interests of its own bourgeoisie. The experienc of the German working class should open the eye of the toiling masses of all countries, and swin

them over to the side of Communism, and should destroy all their illusions and faith in social-democracy as a "Marxian" working-class party.

It is now clear that there remains only the International Workingmen's Association — the Communist International — which is leading a relentless, serious struggle against fascism, against social-democracy, against its reactionary united front with the bourgeoisie, and on behalf of a revolutionary united front for the struggle against the bourgeoisie. Social-democracy has reduced the working masses of Germany to unprecedented misery. Social-democracy opened the door to fascism and predetermined the retreat of the proletariat, in circumstances, when there had taken place an acute sharpening of the political and economic crisis in Germany, when the forces of Communism had grown rapidly, and the difficulties of the bourgeoisie had increased just as fast, but when there was not yet a revolutionary situation and the bourgeoisie still had in reserve the national-socialist party which had not yet outlived itself, not yet compromised itself by participation in the government, and when the united revolutionary front had not yet been formed.

But not a single question of German politics has been solved by the victory of Fascism. There can be no question of capitalism having been stabilised to any degree. Fascism, terror and police measures against the working class cannot solve the economic crisis, abolish poverty and want, hunger and unemployment.

The petty-bourgeois peasant masses who supported the Fascists will very soon discover that they are deceived. Fascism promised the petty-bourgeoisie that it would close down the big stores, abolish co-operative trade, revive small trade. But Fascism cannot take a single step against big capital, *for it is the dictatorship of big capital.* It is already calling upon its storm brigades "not to permit the violation of trading life." Jewish pogroms and even the complete abolition of Jewish trade could give nothing to the petty bourgeoisie, and the further worsening of the standard of living of the masses leads to an even bigger curtailment of the whole trade.

The peasant masses supported the National-Socialists, expecting a reduction in taxation and the abolition of the yoke of banking capital. The prolongation of the moratorium to October and the restriction upon the import of agricultural produce from abroad, raised the hopes of a certain section of the peasants. But no increase in tariffs can now remove the agricultural crisis; it can only lead to a decrease in the consumption inside the country and hence to a further contraction of the inner market which, in turn, will lead to a fresh drop in prices. For those who made use of the moratorium the question is now raised as to what will happen in October when the moratorium expires and their living and homes are put up for sale.

Fascist dictatorship has no other ways of mitigating the poverty and want of the urban petty bourgeoisie and the broad peasant masses. It is absolutely inevitable that the process of pauperisation will continue and that side by side with this process the broad masses will leave the National-Socialist Party. Poverty and want, hunger and unemployment will continue to grow, but at the same time the forces of the Communist Party, which has so excellently passed the heavy tests of the first two months of terrorist Fascist régime, will also grow. The bankruptcy of the National-Socialists will very rapidly be felt, and then there will be an inevitable catastrophe for the bourgeoisie; a revolutionary situation will then arise. The fact that here is no way out for the National-Socialists will force them into fresh adventures in the sphere of foreign politics. Fascism in Germany like the war in the Far East, will still further antagonise all the relations between the states, and the war danger will increase. The whole atmosphere will become still more tense.

This will be the inevitable trend of events.

The E.C.C.I. resolution on the German question is a document of great revolutionary force just because it is based on the stable principles of Marxism-Leninism.

But without doubt *the most important, the main thing in this resolution* is that it establishes the fact that frantic "Fascist dictatorship, which began civil war in the land, cannot solve a single economic or political question concerning modern Germany," that "Hitler is leading Germany to *catastrophe,*" and that "the establishment of Fascist dictatorship . . . hastens Germany's rate of development towards proletarian revolution." Hence the German problems are of even more importance than before for the whole of the world proletariat, for the toilers of all countries, and for the oppressed peoples of the colonies and semi-colonies. Reaction which is triumphing to-day and enraged Fascism is only a short-lived phenomenon. The Fascists are only the temporary masters. Their victory is a short-lived one, and upon its heels will come the proletarian revolution. But the resolution of the E.C.C.I. Presidium at the same time gives a clear, concise prospect of future development, not only in Germany, but in all the capitalist countries. It is the prospect of big class battles, of most acute conflicts between the classes, which demand a still more intense, determined struggle to win the masses and to train the proletariat for

the violent overthrow of capitalism, the overthrow of Fascist dictatorship.

The Communist International approves absolutely and entirely of the policy and tactics of the Central Committee of the German Communist Party and of its leader, Comrade Thälmann. No terror, no Fascist dictatorship can smash this party. It is strengthening its ranks and explaining the new tasks to the masses. It is the only party which is in direct opposition to Fascism. While fighting both against the right opportunist and liquidatory tendencies and moods, and against putschism, sectarianism and petty-bourgeois adventurism, which is the same defeatism merely reversed, the Communist Party of Germany is struggling to win over the majority of the working class, and is leading the masses from the present temporary lull into the struggle towards new, big and ever bigger battles.

The struggle for proletarian dictatorship in Germany is on the order of the day. The road of the German proletariat to victory has been shown by the E.C.C.I. Presidium.

The German Communist Party is marching straight and determinedly along this road.

THE INTENSIFICATION OF THE VERSAILLES ANTAGONISMS AND THE MENACE OF A NEW IMPERIALIST WAR

By N. Rudolph.

THE distinguishing feature of the present-day international situation is the extreme intensification of the antagonisms between the imperialist governments, which has "led to the danger of a new world imperialist war" (theses of the XII Plenum of the E.C.C.I.).

Some observers are fond of comparing the present international situation with the period immediately preceding the beginning of the world imperialist war in 1914. Like the present time, they say, the years 1913-14 were years of general tenseness in Europe, when the keenest Social conflicts were developing in a number of countries and the wave of the workers' movement had risen high—in Russia there was a mass strike movement accompanied by big barricade fights, in Great Britain there was an enormous strike movement, the Irish conflict, etc. At the same time, relations between the imperialist powers had become terrifically strained — in Russia, Great Britain, France and Germany a frantic armament race was going on and the shots at Sarajevo were merely one of the many possible sparks which could have taken place in the atmosphere of extreme electric tenseness which ruled in Europe at the time.

Such a comparison appears to us to be utterly inadequate. In contradistinction to the pre-war period, the world has entered into the epoch of the general crisis of capitalism, and the present contradictions of imperialism are developing on this general crisis, becoming intensified by the world economic crisis, the end of the relative stabilisation of capitalism, the existence of the Soviet Union, which has successfully completed the Five Year Plan in four years, the upsurge of the revolutionary movement in the countries of capitalism, in the colonies and the semi-colonies and the war of Japan against China which has already been going on for half a year. As the result we have a number of peculiar results. Firstly, *the present-day imperialist contradictions on some sectors (Germany, France and its allies, Italy, Jugo-Slavia) are much more intense than in* 1913-14. Secondly, *the contradictions between the imperialist powers are developing with extreme irregularity,* in accordance with the increasing inequality in the development of capitalism. Thirdly, *in the process of the struggle between the imperialists, groups are formed which are extremely unstable.* Fourthly, *in international relations there rules a hitherto unprecedented chaos* corresponding to the chaos caused by the world economic crisis in the world economy of capitalism. Finally, *the whole development is extremely dynamic and fraught with catastrophic changes.*

It is sufficient to examine international relations for the last year to realise this analysis is well founded. It was only in June-July last year that Herriot and MacDonald at Lausanne put their signatures to the now widely known Anglo-French "pact of confidence," the essence of which was the fixing of a common line of action for British and French imperialism on the basis questions of international policy (the question of international debts to America, relations with Germany, the Far Eastern conflict, disarmament

etc.). It would seem to be a return to the Anglo-French Entente and the consolidation of an Anglo-French imperialist bloc against America, Germany and the U.S.S.R. Less than nine months have passed since that time, but not a trace remains of the "pact of confidence." With respect to Germany, France stands at the head of the so-called anti-revisionist bloc, while Britain has come much nearer to the supporters of revision of the Versailles Treaty. On the question of inter-allied debts, the paths of France and Britain have diverged, possibly only temporarily, but nevertheless they have separated.

A particularly clear picture of the chaos in international relations and the sharpness of imperialist contradictions is given by the Disarmament Conference. In a brief period, it received 57 plans for "disarmament," which, like all those which had come previously, were doomed to failure. At the conference various groupings of countries were constantly formed and dissolved —the positions of the representatives of capitalist countries on various questions are sometimes completely contradictory to those they held yesterday.

The advent of the most militant German nationalism to power in Germany in the person of the Hitler government has still further intensified the antagonisms of imperialisms. The Hitler government, which is bringing the open terrorist Fascist dictatorship of the German bourgeoisie into existence, is a bloc of the most reactionary part of finance capital, the East Prussian landlords, the old militarist bureaucracy of the Kaiser and the mass Fascist national Socialist Party, which, with the aid of extreme nationalist demagogy supplied a petty bourgeois basis for the Fascist dictatorship. The advent of this government to power urgently raised the question of the fate of the post-war Versailles system, which was already cracking under the blows of the crisis and the growing resistance of the German toiling masses to the Versailles oppression. National Socialism made use of the uncontrollable strivings of these masses to struggle against the Versailles system, promising them liberation from the oppression of this system and thus they evoked in Germany an upsurge of nationalism and chauvinism such as could not help but cause the greatest alarm to the bourgeoisie of the victorious countries regarding the inviolability of their gains. On the other hand, on the tide of this chauvinist upsurge in Germany, there came to power those elements of Kaiserist Germany which are protagonists of the idea of "revanche" and which in practice carry out the demand of the German bourgeoisie for the further arming of the country. And though this signalises to the imperialists of France, Britain, Poland, etc., the strengthening of German neo-imperialism, of their rival in the struggle for the partition and repartition of the world, in the eyes of the toiling masses of the whole world rise vivid pictures of those who, in 1918, forced the bandit Brest peace treaty on Soviet Russia.

This is why *in that atmosphere of Europe which was already strained to the extreme, saturated with electricity as before a war, the coming of Hitler to power not only sharpened all the imperialist contradictions but directly placed the question of war on the order of the day.* The feelings which have arisen in this connection in France were very vividly characterised in the correspondence of the Paris correspondent of the "Frankfurter Zeitung" on February 14th, 1933, when he wrote:

"It is terrible, but it must be said that owing to all these seeming symptoms, *the danger of war is seriously spoken of here.* Of course, this is not the first time in the last twenty years, but this word is linked up with Germany. But we can guarantee that *never since 1926 have the French used this terrible word with such seriousness as now.*"

Such sentiments are now dominant also in the countries of Eastern and South-Eastern Europe. The bourgeois press of Poland, Jugo-Slavia, Czecho-Slovakia, Latvia, etc., speak all the time of the tremendously growing danger of a new war. The formula of the inevitability of a new war has become an accepted term, even in the mouths of the social democrats, who claimed, not so long ago, that the world war was the "last war." In this spirit, for example, the well-known Latvian social-democrat, Zelens, late foreign minister of Latvia spoke recently with the greatest clarity.

The basic reason of all these moods is, of course, not the nationalist anti-Versailles demagogy of Hitler, in whose seriousness the imperialists have little faith. The basic reason is in general the conviction that *it is impossible to maintain the Versailles system intact, that in particular there must inevitably be a revision of the territorial boundaries in post-Versailles Europe, and finally, that the imperialist antagonism connected with all this cannot be solved peacefully.*

The revision of the Versailles system began in reality long before Hitler came into power. Under the blows of the economic crisis crumbled the regular "final" plan for regulating the reparations question, the Young plan, which was accepted not long ago by the German bourgeoisie as its greatest achievement. Reparation payments were in practice annulled in 1931 with

the declaration of the Hoover moratorium, and the world crisis is responsible for this and not the German bourgeoisie and its government of Brüning and von Papen, who made the formal arrangements for the actual liquidation of reparations.

The question of German armaments, of the so-called "equal rights" of Germany in the sphere of armaments was raised even by General von Schleicher when he was war minister. Under the pressure of the nationalist wave in Germany and faced with the actually commencing arming of Germany, France and Britain were compelled to recognise in words this "equality of rights" for Germany. MacDonald went even further. He proposed in his "disarmament" plan to double the numbers of the German Reichswehr, i.e., to increase it to 200,000 men on condition that the period of service was cut down. In practice, of course, all this is of insignificant importance. It is a fact that in Germany a powerful militarist apparatus has begun to be formed — the military Fascist "Steel Helmets" (250,000 men) and the National-Socialist storm troops (400-500,000 men), who are arming and training either under the pretence of "auxiliary police" or without any concealment. A ministry of aviation has been formed, etc. Faced with all these facts, French imperialism and its allies are found to be utterly helpless. No diplomatic protests and demarches can stop the arming of Germany. It can only be stopped by a preventive war against Germany, but at the present day, neither France nor Poland can make up their mind to this step. And meanwhile there has begun in practice the undermining of the military hegemony of France and its allies which was built up after the world war.

To sum up, *the question of the fate of the Versailles system has been converted by the whole course of events into a question of the revision of the post-Versailles boundaries.* Not only the frontiers of Germany are in question, not only the Polish corridor and Upper Silesia (although this is a decisive question), but all the post-Versailles frontiers. The treaties of Versailles, St. Germain, Trianon, etc., handed over millions of Germans by force to Czecho-Slovakia, millions of Hungarians to Rumania and Czecho-Slovakia, united to Jugo-Slavia the more cultured provinces of Horvatia and Slovenia, which groan under the yoke of Great Serbian dictatorship. Finally, these treaties doomed to a pitiful existence "independent" Austria, depriving six million Austrian-Germans of the right of joining Germany ("Anschluss") and handing them over to the servitude of Entente capital. This is what is spoken of when the question rises of revising boundaries. This is why even the raising of the question of the Polish Corridor and Danzig will inevitably lead to an outburst of antagonisms connected with the struggle for the re-moulding of Central and South-Eastern Europe, i.e., raising the question of separating Horvatia and Slovenia from Serbia, of Transylvania, Banat, the Hungarian part of Slovenia, the "Anschluss" of Austria, etc. The acuteness of this whole question is increased further by the fact that not only Germany, Hungary, Austria and Bulgaria, which were defeated in the world war, are interested in the revision of post-war frontiers, but Italy also, which is trying to weaken the French military bloc and, above all, its immediate rival in the Balkans—Jugo-Slavia.

Can it be imagined that all these acute antagonisms can be solved peacefully? Can it be imagined that Poland will relinquish the Danzig Corridor or Upper Silesia, the metallurgy of which is the basis of the Polish war industry, to Germany without a struggle or even without war? Can we suppose that without war Rumania will give up to Hungary considerable parts of Transylvania, that Jugo-Slavia will abandon Banata, that Czecho-Slovakia will give up the Hungarian part of Slovakia, or that the Great Serbian bourgeoisie will consent without a most bloody war to the separation of Horvatia, Slovenia, Bosnia and Montenegro, to satisfy the appetite of Italian imperialism?

We cannot suppose such things, of course. It is true that various agreements between various countries are quite possible, the more so that attempts are being made to tempt Poland and other countries with compensation for the possible territorial losses, at the expense of the Soviet Union (Ukraine) or Lithuania, but all these antagonisms cannot be radically solved peacefully. *There has never been a case in the history of the world when the repartition of any part of it was carried on by diplomatic methods and not by a bloody war. This is why the spectre of a bloody war is assuming real substance. This is why the question of the danger of a new war has taken its place on the order of the day of European politics.*

The intensification of imperialist antagonisms in Europe, and the raising of the question of the revision of the post-Versailles frontiers have increased many times the frantic armament race. In France, a plan is being hurriedly carried out to reorganise the whole army with the aim of strengthening its offensive powers, new forts are being constructed on the German frontier and naval construction is being increased. The German papers openly accuse Poland of concentrating troops in the Corridor. In

Poland itself, the generals, the parliamentarians and "Socialists" call from the tribune of the Seim and in the press for an increase in the preparedness of the Polish army for war. In some circles there is even talk of the possibility of a preventive war on Germany with the aim of administering a military defeat to the latter before German armaments have become a genuine reality. In the same way, feverish armament is taking place in all the countries of the Little Entente.

But the matter is not limited merely to armaments. Faced with the ever greater disintegration of the Versailles system, the small states of Europe are striving to unite their forces to increase their resistance to a revision of territorial boundaries. These strivings are stimulated still more by the growing distrust of the small countries in the policy of the big powers, whose tendency to make territorial concessions to Germany at the expense of the small countries (Poland and the Little Entente) is becoming more and more obvious. Not very long ago Czecho-Slovakia, Rumania and Jugo-Slavia, which were even previously united in the Little Entente, made a new *"organisational pact," which was practically a military alliance, directed against the revisionist aims of Germany and Hungary and especially against the imperialist aims of Italy.* In addition, this pact is a peculiar kind of insurance of these countries against possible agreements between the great powers and Germany at their expense. It is intended to make the Little Entente more independent of any changes in the foreign policy of the chief guardian of the Versailles system—French imperialism.

At the same time, the tendency of Poland to an active rapprochement with the Little Entente is noticeable. Up till now, Poland was averse to such a rapprochement because it would inevitably worsen its relations with Hungary and Italy, against which above all the Little Entente was formed. Moreover, Poland needed good relations with Hungary and Italy very greatly in case of war against the U.S.S.R. At the present day, the intensity of imperialist antagonisms has so greatly sharpened that in spite of these considerations, Poland finds itself compelled to make a far-reaching rapprochement with Czecho-Slovakia and Jugo-Slavia, which is reflected in the statements of the European press on the signing of a Polish-Czecho-Slovakian military convention and also in the demonstrative resignation of the newly appointed Polish ambassador to Rome, Pototski.

Finally, Poland is increasingly working on the formation of a Baltic Alliance between Poland, Latvia, Esthonia and Lithuania. This aim meets with complete sympathy from Latvia and Esthonia, while the Latvian Social-Democrats (Zelens, etc.), openly advocate a military alliance with Poland, on the pretence of the danger from Hitler. The policy of forming a Baltic alliance, however, encounters the resistance of Fascist Lithuania, which sets itself the main task of a struggle for the return of Vilna, which was seized from it by Poland.

And so the preparations for a new war proceed in all directions. *The feverish armament race is supplemented by an equally feverish building up of military blocs.* In all countries, and first of all in Germany, the terror against the working class is assuming a monstrous extent. Simultaneously, in a number of countries even the Pacifist petty-bourgeois organisations are being broken up. Finance capital and the military circles are trying to remove any resistance to a new war in advance and assure the unhampered development of all the preparations for war.

The imperialists see the danger of a sudden outburst of the antagonisms of the Versailles system and the rise of a new imperialist war with the greatest clearness. At the same time they see the whole danger for imperialism of such a military outbreak. A new war threatens first of all to destroy the relationship of forces between the imperialist powers which has taken form on the basis of a whole system of peace treaties. It threatens to put the national colonial question on the order of the day, not only in the sense of a new and inevitable redivision of the colonies as the result of war, but also in the sense of a tremendous increase in the centrifugal tendencies and the national independence movement in the big colonial empires, and above all in the British empire, whose contacts with the dominions (Canada, Australia and South Africa) have greatly weakened in recent years. And chief of all, the experience of the world imperialist war, not only in the defeated countries but in France and Great Britain, makes the imperialists fear the danger that the Communist slogan of converting imperialist war into civil war will be put into effect. This fear is increased still further by the realisation that alongside the capitalist world there exists the mighty Soviet Union, the bulwark and the basis of the world proletariat.

All this together leads to some of the *leading imperialist politicians using every effort to avoid war between the imperialist powers, to find methods even for temporary elimination of imperialist antagonisms with the aim of creating a united anti-Soviet bloc for new intervention in the U.S.S.R.* War against the U.S.S.R., for the destruction of the proletarian state and for the division of the so-called "Russian inherit-

ance" is the line along which the imperialists see a way out of the world economic crisis, and out of the imperialist antagonisms which are irritating the capitalist world. These gentlemen hope to satisfy the appetites of the dissatisfied states and those inclined to revisionism at the expense of the U.S.S.R., at the expense of the territory forming the Soviet Union (Ukraine, Far East, etc.).

The attempts of Mussolini and MacDonald to form a new "European Directory" by means of a four-power pact (England, Italy, France and Germany) is precisely such an attempt to switch over the anti-war intenseness of modern Europe on to increased and accelerated preparations for war against the U.S.S.R. The coming of Hitler to power in Germany not only means an intensification of the imperialist antagonisms in Europe, but it also means a strengthening of the anti-Soviet line of the German bourgeoisie. In his book, "My Fight," Hitler develops the task of the anti-Soviet policy of the German bourgeoisie in detail. The chief specialist of the National-Socialists on foreign policy, Alfred Rosenberg, emphasises more vividly still in his literary works that German Fascism sets itself the task of a struggle against the Soviet Union and for the partition of its territory. The plan of foreign policy of the National-Socialists is as follows: Germany, Great Britain and Italy must make an alliance for a joint struggle against the U.S.S.R. Poland must be cut off by handing over the Corridor to Germany and separating West Ukraine from it. The Soviet Union must be dismembered. Soviet Ukraine together with West Ukraine must be converted into an "independent" bourgeois state under the aegis of Germany. The remaining bourgeois Russia must open up Siberia for German colonisation and enterprise. Poland can eventually be compensated by handing over to it part or all of Lithuania, if in general victorious Germany does not try to swallow up Poland and the Baltic States as it tried at the time of the Brest Litovsk treaty.

The foregoing political conception of the National-Socialists thus opens up for British imperialism a certain field for combinations by which an anti-Soviet bloc can temporarily be knocked together. MacDonald and Baldwin understand, of course, that there is fantasy in the above-mentioned plans, but a certain part can be accepted, and Fascist Germany can be chiefly utilised for anti-Soviet combinations. For this purpose it is necessary to obtain consent from France and its allies to the revision of post-Versailles frontiers. Germany must receive the minimum territorial concessions which would permit it to enter the united capitalist bloc. The small governments—the Little Entente and Poland—must make certain sacrifices, so to speak, in the name of the general class interests of imperialism. This is the essence of the idea of the "European Directory" and the four-power pact.

The contents of the Mussolini-MacDonald plan are disclosed with the greatest clearness by the extremely well-informed Geneva Franco-Polish paper "Journal de Nacion," on April 1st. Touching on the fourth section of the four-power pact, which was published in the French press, stating that the powers undertake to carry on a joint line of policy in all European and non-European questions, the paper states:

"We admit that we see only one possibility of carrying on this general line of conduct, and that is an anti-Soviet crusade. Hitler and Papen have been preaching it for a long time. . . . In Britain, Deterding and Beaverbrook are advocates of this crusade. . . . We admit that if article 4 has any meaning at all, we cannot give it any other likely explanation."

Thus the significance of the Mussolini-MacDonald plan consists firstly in the revival of the plan of forming a united anti-Soviet bloc, in a new form, secondly in a serious enlargement of the revisionist group of powers in Europe by attracting Britain to it, and thirdly in the placing on the order of the day in international politics the question of the revision of the post-Versailles boundaries.

In the bourgeois press some facts from behind the scenes have already penetrated as to the many negotiations in Rome between Mussolini and MacDonald, and also as to the negotiations between Great Britain and France. From this mass of information, sometimes representing the obvious result of journalist combinations, we can obtain some very obvious preliminary elements of the plan of the four-power pact. It evidently amounts to the following. In principle, the four great powers must recognise the necessity of revising frontiers. The inclusion of France in the pact and the establishing of a general line of action of the great powers must lead to the limitation of the freedom of France and split it away from Poland and the Little Entente, isolate the latter and compel them to make territorial concessions to Germany, Hungary and Italy. On the basis of these concessions a temporary elimination of imperialist antagonisms and the formation of an anti-Soviet bloc must take place. This character of the four-power pact is well understood by the Polish official "Polish Gazette," which wrote that the project is based on the following four principles:

(1) "Intervention against other countries, be-

cause it is unnecessary to conclude pacts so as to make mutual concessions.

(2) "Compulsion, because if this were not the case the decisions of the four gentlemen who represent four governments would not be of any significance for the world which the pact wants to save.

(3) "The pact must further be based on the deprival of freedom of action of some of those participating in it.

(4) "It must be based on the limiting of the rights of other states."

The diplomatic language of the "Polish Gazette" discloses the imperialist plans of the initiators of the pact with the greatest clarity.

As for the real proposals for the revision of boundaries, they evidently amount to the plan of taking the Corridor from Poland and giving it to Germany, in which case Poland must be compensated at the outset by giving it Lithuania with Memel port. The boundaries of Czecho-Slovakia must be "rectified" for the benefit of Hungary and the latter must receive part of Transylvania (Rumania) inhabited by Hungarians, etc. For that matter, the plans of some of the revisionist countries do not stop here. Thus, Germany also wants the return of Upper Silesia and the Austrian Anschluss, while Italy wants the separation of Horvatia and Slovenia from Jugo-Slavia and the transfer of some of the French North African colonies and Near Eastern colonies to her (Tunis, Syria).

Such are the plans of the imperialists. But it is one thing to make plans and another to carry them out. The revisionist strivings of Mussolini go much further than the policy of British imperialism will allow. Italian Fascism is directing them not only against the allies of France but against France itself. The rejection of the idea of enlarging the bloc of leading powers by including the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A. in it has the aim of isolating France in this bloc and not allowing the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. into the bloc, the position of which on all these questions may conflict with the Italian plans. On the other hand, Italy wants to limit the revision of the treaties in its own interests—Italian Fascism is against the "anschluss" of Austria and Germany, because this would strengthen the position of Germany in the Balkans and would bring Germany nearer to the Balkans and the Near-Eastern markets, where Germany and Italy meet as competitors. Therefore, Italian Fascism supports the Dolfuss group in Austria and the Heimwehr wing of Fascism as contrasted to the National-Socialists, who support their Austrian comrades in their strivings for an Anschluss.

At the same time, Britain will not go so far against France as Italy wishes. The interests of British imperialism are not limited to a narrow circle of purely European contradictions. British imperialism is an imperialism on a world scale and its main contradictions are not in Europe but against America, particularly in the Far East. Therefore Britain cannot drive France from itself. France is necessary to it for its big imperialist combinations. Therefore Britain is prepared to make a compromise with France on questions of European policy, which has already made itself felt in the vacillations of Great Britain in connection with the resistance of France to the Mussolini-MacDonald plan. Therefore we can speak of a big zig-zag of Britain in the direction of the revisionist group of powers, but not the inclusion of Britain in it.

The project of the four-power pact was met with sharp hostility in the countries of the French military bloc. France itself does not want to weaken its military allies in the interests of satisfying the imperialist demands of Germany and Italy. The Little Entente and Poland opposed these plans still more definitely. They were to have given up their territory to Germany, Hungary, etc., strengthening their rivals and weakening their own position, their power, their rôle in Central Europe. Therefore they demand to be included in the system of the four-power pact and that the revisionist side of the plan be abandoned. Otherwise they will disrupt this project. The countries of the French military alliance are not at all against the uniting forces of capitalism against the U.S.S.R., but they demand as a preliminary condition a guarantee against Germany, that it will not attack their integrity and independence. They are not at all prepared to make sacrifices, especially territorially, on the promise of doubtful compensation (dividing the skin of the Russian bear which has yet to be killed). Let others bear these sacrifices, let Germany, Hungary, etc., subordinate their interests to the general interests of world capitalism. Let them await the satisfaction of their claims till it is possible to divide up the skin of the bear.

But besides all these, the leading politicians of these countries are convinced that if Germany is given the possibility of arming and mobilising its army, this will put the existence of their countries under the blows of German imperialism. Everyone knows the annexationist plans of Rosenberg and Hitler towards the Baltic countries and everyone remembers the annexationist policy of Germany in 1917-18 in these countries which was most clearly expressed in the Brest peace treaty. In this respect, very characteristic are the statements of the Latvian politicians, e.g., the prominent Social-Democrat, Zelens, who openly points

out that the coming of Hitler to power has created a direct menace to the independence of Latvia. Still more clearly are the prospects of the realisation of the plans of MacDonald-Mussolini by the well known Polish bourgeois National-Democratic paper, "A.B.C." Criticising the position of the Ukranian bourgeois nationalists who demand the participation of Poland together with Germany in the anti-Soviet bloc, "A.B.C." writes:

"This is the essence of the question. Ukraine already sees the big anti-Soviet front of the Western governments, of course under the leadership of Hitler, so that Poland would bow gracefully to Hitler who has to march to the East over the corpse of Poland."

All this explains why the Mussolini-MacDonald plan has not brought about accord but a sharpening of the contradictions in the camp of the imperialists, between the countries with revisionist tendencies and the countries of the French military bloc. It was precisely this which induced Britain to retreat from the first plan of the four-power pact and agree to the French demands, which at present nullify the revisionist side of the plan. These hesitations of British diplomacy do not deprive the foreign policy of Britain of its anti-Soviet keenness. The organisation of a big anti-Soviet bloc for war against the U.S.S.R. is a matter which requires lengthy preparations. At the present moment the British plans have a more limited aim—*to bring about the external-political isolation of the U.S.S.R. and not to permit the recognition of the U.S.S.R. which is expected from the U.S.A.* The consistent anti-Soviet actions of British imperialism—the denouncement of the commercial agreement with the U.S.S.R., the anti-Soviet campaign in connection with the trial of wreckers in the U.S.S.R. — the British engineers of Metro-Vickers—and finally the passing of a bill putting an embargo on Soviet goods, has this very aim. It is very characteristic that these efforts coincide with the activity of Japanese diplomacy, which sent its prominent representative Matsuoka to Washington to influence the U.S.A. in abandoning the recognition of the U.S.S.R.

The British anti-Soviet plans meet with a favourable response from the ruling Fascist circles of Germany. Thus, the prominent Hugenberg specialist on foreign politics, Professor Freitag Loringhofen, writes in "Der Tag" on April 6th:

"The Anglo-Soviet conflict automatically increases the weight of Germany. In any case, it is necessary to have the will and successful tactics to utilise this position. . . . The sharpening of the conflict with Russia will very soon compel Britain to value the friendship of Germany."

The words of Freitag Loringhafen are those of the Commissar for Foreign Affairs of the National-Socialists, Alfred Rosenberg, who, in the "Volkischer Beobachter" on April 6th, assured Britain that it is first of all interested in friendly relations with the Hitler government in connection with the conflict with the U.S.S.R. Thus German Fascism offers its anti-Soviet services to British imperialism quite openly. It is not surprising that Germany had a very favourable attitude to the four-power pact and bitterly opposed the French amendments to this plan. This anti-Soviet position of the ruling circles of Fascist Germany is still more emphasised by the meeting in Rome between Mussolini, the Austrian Chancellor Dolfuss and the German ministers Papen and Goering. Well informed bourgeois journals state that in Rome *Papen and Goering are forging plans for a new anti-Soviet "Holy Alliance."*

In turn, the U.S.A. is very greatly disturbed by the plans of Rome and London, which are striving to create a European bloc without and against the U.S.A. For this reason, the representative of the U.S.A., Norman Davis, recently visited Paris, where he openly supported the French opposition to the MacDonald-Mussolini plan. The Hoover proposal for the rapid calling of the Washington meeting of leading capitalist powers for the preparation of a world economic conference should also be partly regarded as a step directed against this plan.

On the whole, we see that the regular attempts of the imperialists to reach some arrangement among themselves on the subject of even the temporary elimination of the contradictions of the Versailles system, and the formation of a united anti-Soviet bloc have so far ended in failure. They have not led to a reduction of chaos in international relations and have not weakened the instability of imperialist groupings. Contradictions continue to sharpen and thus increase the danger of a new war. But these attempts have plainly shown the increase in the active anti-Soviet tendencies in the camp of imperialism.

The working class of the U.S.S.R. and the whole of the world proletariat must therefore attentively watch all the machinations of international imperialism, no matter what European capital they take place in. In this connection it is further necessary to point out the *disgraceful conduct of international Social-Democracy. Faced with the growing war danger in Europe it is very plain that the Social-Democrats of all*

countries are preparing a new August 4th. In Germany the Social-Democratic leaders have long since crawled on their bellies before the Fascist government and even recalled Wels from the Executive Committee of the II International.

In France, the Socialists, headed by Leon Blum, are making gestures against Fascism and against militarism . . . in Germany, but this is only the reverse side of their collaboration with the French bourgeoisie in the defence of the Versailles system. In France we have even now, in reality, a united front from Poincaré to Leon Blum, just as in Germany we have a united front from Hitler to Wels. In Poland the P.P.S. openly announces its support of the Fascist government in case of war against Germany. Finally, in Latvia the Social-Democrat, Zelens, calls for a military alliance with Poland. Only the Communist Parties carry on a struggle against imperialist war and against intervention in the U.S.S.R. Only they, in case of war or intervention, will use every effort to turn imperialist war into civil war in the shortest possible time. For success in this matter they must increase tenfold their exposure of the Social-Democratic parties, which are even now stating their readiness to repeat their treacherous policy of August 4th.

THE STRUGGLE FOR THE UNITED FRONT IN CZECHO-SLOVAKIA.

By KOEHLER.

THE REPERCUSSION OF THE GERMAN EVENTS UPON THE SITUATION IN CZECHO-SLOVAKIA.

THE repercussion in Czecho-Slovakia of the events of the last few weeks in Germany, around which all attention centred, has been tremendous, affecting the entire economic and political life of Czecho-Slovakia, which borders on Germany. They not only accentuate the already sharp contradictions in this country, but profoundly influence the development of the Czecho-Slovakian Labour movement also. The advent of fascism to power in Germany accelerates the process of fascisation of the Czech bourgeoisie and their lackeys, the Social-Democratic Party, on the one hand; on the other hand it accelerates also the achievement of solidarity among the masses under revolutionary leadership in the struggle against the offensive of the capitalists, against fascism and the danger of imperialist war. The increased efforts made by the German bourgeoisie in connection with the victory of fascism to bring about a revision of the Versailles system, or to conclude alliances with other imperialist powers such as Italy and Hungary, which are anxious for a revision, have greatly increased the activity of the Czech bourgeoisie in the field of foreign politics. The Czech ally of French imperialism rattles his sabre with increasing vehemence. The Czech bourgeoisie—the servant—exhibits greater energy in defence of the *status quo* in Central Europe, in defence of the predatory Versailles peace treaty, than does France, the master itself. The "Little Entente," which only recently, as a result of the prominent initiative and valiant efforts of Dr. Benesch, the Czecho-Slovak Minister of Foreign Affairs, united to form "a new European Great Power," headed by the Czech bourgeoisie, declares upon every occasion that any revision of the Versailles system endangers the vital interests of the states comprising the Little Entente and will therefore be strongly opposed by the "new European Great Power." Messrs. Benesch & Co. have lately been speaking more and more openly of war. As late as March, Bradetsch, the Czecho-Slovakian Minister of War, in connection with a report on the foreign political situation in the Military Committee, permitted himself to be interpellated by the government parties on the question of whether, in view of the critical situation in Central Europe, "with war liable to break out any moment, the Czecho-Slovakian army was prepared." War Minister Bradetsch, in reply stated without hesitation that the "Czecho-Slovakian army was prepared for all emergencies." This sabre-rattling is the clearest expression of the aggravating influence which the German events exert upon the imperialist contradictions and the war danger.

It is of interest to note how the Czech bourgeoisie, in making its threats of war, hypocritically attempts to assume the rôle of a great democrat. It represents the defence of the predatory imperialist peace treaty of Versailles to be a defence of democracy against fascist dictatorship (in Germany, Italy, Hungary). Of course, it breathes not a word about the bloody dictatorship in the lands of its own accomplices

(Poland, Roumania, Yugo-Slavia) or its own dictatorship at home. This demagogy, which claims to "defend democracy against fascist dictatorship," serves, primarily, as a welcome argument in the mouths of the social-fascists speaking German and Czechish, who defend the imperialist policy of their own bourgeoisie unconditionally and without hesitation. With such phrases as "Strengthen Democracy" or "the advance of fascist reaction forces us virtually to subscribe to the memorandum of the Minister of Foreign Affairs" (i.e., to the imperialist war policy), the social-fascist leaders attempt to-day to deceive the toiling masses, to encourage them and ensnare them into supporting the imperialist policy of the Czech bourgeoisie.

Even the first weeks of the fascist dictatorship in Germany led to an aggravation of the economic crisis in Czecho-Slovakia. Trade with Germany was almost completely stopped. From the very beginning of the economic crisis trade between Czecho-Slovakia and Germany had suffered severely, as appears from the following figures (in billion crowns) :—

Year.	Exports from Czecho-Slovakia.	Imports from Germany.
1930 ...	... 2.9 ...	3.9
1931 ...	... 2.1 ...	3.3
1932 ...	... 1.2 ...	1.9

This represents a decline of imports from Germany of 51.3 per cent., and in export to Germany of 58.7 per cent. The statistics adduced further disclose that trade between Germany and Czecho-Slovakia has not only dropped to less than half, but the balance of trade has been *exceptionally* unfavourable to Czecho-Slovakia during all these years. As early as September, 1932, the Czecho-Slovakian government negotiated with the German government concerning a change in the ratio of exports and imports, and demanded that instead of the ratio of 1 :1.74 then prevailing, the ratio be set at 1 :1, i.e., that the balance of trade with Germany be even. The German government emphatically declined this proposition. In consequence of this, and, furthermore, as a result of the unfavourable balance of Czecho-Slovakian trade and payments, and the catastrophic condition of its state of finances, the Czecho-Slovakian bourgeoisie found itself unable to meet its commitments, and, at the end of February, 1933, all payments to Germany were stopped by order of the government. A collective account was opened at the state bank, out of which remittances were to be made to German creditors only, to the extent that the finances of the Czecho-Slovakian government permitted.

The Hitler-Hugenberg government retaliated at once. It stopped all payments to Czecho-Slovakia, prohibited the export of foreign currency, permitted travellers going to Czecho-Slovakia to take along only fifty marks and stopped the quotation of the Czech crown on the Berlin Exchange. This brought trade between the two countries and travel across the Czecho-Slovakian-German borderline to almost a complete standstill.

This economic warfare carried to such extremes deals Czecho-Slovakia a very severe blow, as Germany is by far the best customer of that country. A great number of factories in the export industry closed down immediately. The bankruptcy of some of the savings banks in the German border cities and the run on others, especially the crash of the Central German Savings Banks of Czecho-Slovakia, which occurred in the middle of March, did not fail to produce its aftermath in the form of the extraordinarily acute economic relations which ensued with Germany. To this must be added the fact that in consequence of the stoppage of foreign travel due to the measures of the government, Czecho-Slovakia is threatened with the loss of at least 250,000,000 crowns. If the negotiations for a truce with the German government which have been initiated do not have a favourable issue, Czecho-Slovakian economy, with its one and a half million unemployed, will be literally face to face with catastrophe, because even in 1932 Germany absorbed 17 per cent. of the total exports of Czecho-Slovakia and is therefore by far the greatest market for Czecho-Slovakian industrial products.

The German events were also reflected in the domestic policy of Czecho-Slovakia. The more difficult the economic position of the Czecho-Slovakian bourgeoisie becomes, the more violent are its attacks upon the working class. Precisely the last few weeks have witnessed an intensification of these attacks. The offensive launched against the wages of the workers as well as the mass discharge of workers from the factories continue without interruption. The "strong-arm government," which includes seven "socialist" ministers, intensifies these attacks by increasing taxes, tariff rates, and the already exorbitant prices of necessities. A general attack is being made against the gigantic army of unemployed. According to the Ghent system, the doles to the unemployed are being reduced by one-third. Seasonal workers are dropped entirely from the list of those receiving unemployment benefits and hundreds of thousands of those who had been getting ten kc., which the government calls its "subsistence" policy, are now compelled to work four hours for every ten kc. they receive as state support. The same applies to the unemployed

supported according to the Ghent system. This is to introduce compulsory labour of the unemployed throughout the entire country.

At the same time an internal loan of three billion crowns was opened for subscription under the lying slogan of "Work for the Workers." But this "Labour Loan" has yielded very little work for the unemployed, as it serves, in the first place, to make good the deficit of two and a half billion crowns in the budget of last year, and to write off delinquent taxes due from the big taxpayers. Two hundred and fifty crowns of every thousand crowns in back taxes were at once deducted from the amount due from these big tax defrauders, if they subscribed to four hundred crowns' worth of "Labour Loan." The remaining three hundred and fifty crowns he was allowed to pay in old, to-day virtually valueless, government paper. Thus these big tax dodgers actually receive an amnesty by means of this ingenious "Labour Loan," while the small fry are relieved of their last savings through a campaign reminiscent of war loan propaganda.

Parallel with the economic attacks against the masses, the brutal terror of the bourgeoisie is constantly intensified. The Czech bourgeoisie is preparing to deliver a new, big blow. Again under the hypocritical mask of defending democracy, it is drawing up an Enabling Act for the government, which, if possible, is to raise fascisation to the altitude which the German bourgeoisie has already attained with the aid of the Nazis. The "reconstituted" government is to be authorised to take all steps necessary to protect the currency and economy, and to combat crisis and unemployment without seeking the prior consent of parliament. Parliamentarianism is to be "renovated" by "changing" the election laws and subjecting the entire electoral procedure to a "thorough-going" revision, while "the parties that abuse their constitutional rights for the purpose of overthrowing democracy are to be deprived of these rights." It becomes apparent at a glance that the Hitler-Hugenberg emergency decrees serve as a prototype for this Enabling Act. It is a question of the "lesser evil," recommended by the social-fascists to introduce extraordinary ordinances for the purpose of curbing the revolutionary labour movement which is growing at a whirlwind pace, of forcing the Communist Party to go underground, of strengthening fascism in Czecho-Slovakia.

The continuous attack upon the standard of living of the workers and the rising terror of the bourgeoisie bring the working class more and more into motion under the leadership of the Communist Party of Czecho-Slovakia. The events in Germany, the unprecedented betrayal and bankruptcy of German social-democracy, the victory of Hitler fascism and the bloody terror against the German working class have accelerated the development of the mass movement against the rising terror of the Czech bourgeoisie. The working class in Czecho-Slovakia pursues the developments in Germany with utmost attention. The proletariat watches closely the results of the domination of bourgeois democracy and the policy of the "lesser evil," which the social-fascists carried out and which led to the victory of fascism. Over eight hundred German fugitives who are staying in Czecho-Slovakia have informed the Czecho-Slovakian workers of what they saw going on in Germany under the bloody fascist dictatorship.

The events of the last few weeks in Germany served the Czecho-Slovakian working class as a mirror in which they can visualise their own immediate future in the event of not being able to thwart the plans of the bourgeoisie and the policy of the social-fascists in time: bloody fascism stalking through Czecho-Slovakia, the same as through the "third Reich of Hitler." Strongly influenced by what is happening in Germany, there is a powerful movement on foot in Czecho-Slovakia against its own bourgeoisie, against the menace of fascism, against the constant attacks upon the standard of living of the masses, and the policy of the "lesser evil," which the social-democrats are pursuing in the same criminal manner as in other countries. A mighty movement for the proletarian united front, for solidarity in the working class in its struggle against the offensive of the capitalists, against fascism and the war danger, has swept the entire country. The fact that, at present, this movement centres largely in the German border districts is to be ascribed to the immediate connection between the working class there and that of Germany, and to the happenings in that country. The Communist Party stands at the head of this movement, leads, organises and promotes it with all the energy it commands. Great masses of social-democratic workers are being reached by this movement, despite the rapid counter-measures taken by the social-democratic leaders.

THE "NON-AGGRESSION PACT" OF THE SOCIAL-DEMOCRATIC PARTY.

As early as last winter the social-democratic leaders felt the ground burning under their feet. They realised that the slogan of the proletarian united front was becoming more and more firmly rooted among the social-democratic workers. With increasing frequency the revolutionary united front was realised in practice in the struggle for concrete demands, in which the rank and file

went over the heads of the social-democratic leaders. Finally the united front movement under the leadership of the Communist Party of Czecho-Slovakia assumed such dimensions that the social-democratic party leaders could no longer content themselves with their old tactics of brusquely and brutally rejecting and disparaging the united front, for to do so would have meant the certain loss of great masses of their followers. They therefore resorted to a palpable manoeuvre to frustrate the movement for a united front, and to retain their influence upon the masses. Koudelka, a representative in Parliament, was selected to propose the well-known "Non-Aggression Pact" to the C.P.Cz. The proposal appeared in the "Pravo Lidu" and later made the rounds of all parties of the Second International in various forms.

The following is a concise statement of the Koudelka pact: the C.P.Cz. and the Social-Democratic Party are to conclude a mutual "Non-Aggression Pact" similar in nature to that concluded between the Soviet Union and, for instance, France or Poland. Each party is to retain its liberty of action in the sphere of tactics; however mutual criticism is to cease, and each party is to guarantee that it will not encroach upon the influence the other enjoys among the masses. Thus the "united front" would be consummated in Czecho-Slovakia.

The C.P.Cz. thoroughly and without delay unmasked this crude and unprecedented "Non-Aggression Pact" swindle before the masses. Comrade Gottwald was quite right when he wrote: "They offer us a pact to engage in a joint attack upon the working class." He then exposes the social-fascist deception bit for bit. The Party press daily prints examples taken from actual life to show what such a pact would mean in practice: the social-fascists, as members of the government and otherwise, will continue to commit one scoundrelly deed after another against the working class, while the C.P.Cz. by its silence, "according to the terms of the agreement," is to sanction these scoundrelly deeds before the masses, and, in addition, is to guarantee that the influence of the social-fascists among the masses remains intact.

The Party mobilised the social-democratic workers, many of whom exposed the swindle of their leaders, in numerous letters published in the *Rude Pravo*. The C.P.Cz. organised great discussion meetings in the factories, to which Koudelka and the other social-democratic leaders were invited to defend their "non-aggression pact" before the masses against the Communists. The social-democratic leaders cowardly ducked these meetings, failing to put in an appearance at a single one of them. But the workers condemned this social-fascist swindle and favoured the proletarian united front with the Communists. Owing to the correct initiative taken by the C.P.Cz. in their speeches, the social-fascists did not succeed in causing any confusion worth mentioning among the Czecho-Slovakian workers by their non-aggression pact swindle. Nor were they successful in thwarting the movement for a united front. On the contrary, the "non-aggression pact" swindle was turned against themselves, and became a new convincing proof for the social-democratic workers of the fact that the proletarian united front can be realised only over the heads of their leaders, and under the leadership of the C.P.Cz.

THE MANIFESTO OF THE COMINTERN AND THE UNITED FRONT PROPOSAL OF THE C.P.CZ.

The constantly growing united front movement and the disputes with social-democracy over the "non-aggression pact" had created a fertile soil among the Czecho-Slovakian working masses for the united front Manifesto of the Comintern.* Even before this manifesto was issued, Comrade Gottwald in the Party press covered in detail the resolutions of the bureau of the Second International which, as is well known, called upon the Comintern to engage in a stern struggle against fascism. Comrade Gottwald showed the Czecho-Slovakian proletariat that these resolutions were nothing but empty words and lying phrases, because if this were not so, why did the Social-Democratic Party of Germany already at that time support Hindenburg instead of attempting to bring about the fall of Hitler fascism by marching shoulder to shoulder with the C.P. of Germany through the political mass strike irresistibly in the direction of armed combat? Similarly, would not social-democracy in Czecho-Slovakia, instead of fighting with the bourgeoisie against the workers, have to fight with the C.P.Cz. for the liberation of the political prisoners, the abrogation of the prohibition against demonstrations and of the censorship, have to fight against wage cuts, the mass discharge of workers and so forth? As long as they do not do so, all words of the Second International concerning a joint struggle are nothing but a manoeuvre to deceive the masses.

In view of that has been stated above, the united front manifesto of the Comintern, with its clear and unequivocal proposals to fight fascism and the offensive of the employers, had a correspondingly greater effect upon the masses of workers in Szecho-Slovakia.

The manifesto of the Comintern touched the hearts of millions of Czecho-Slovakian toilers. It was received with enthusiasm in hundreds of Social-Democratic Party organisations which

* "Daily Worker," March 8th.

penly attested their approval by sending in tters, holding meetings and joint demonstrations ith the Communists. The movement among the ocial-democratic workers was raised to a still igher plane through the direct united front proosals of the C.P.Cz., the Red trade unions and he Young Communist League, which proposals ere addressed to the social-democratic reformist rade unions and the socialist youth.

The C.C. of the C.P.Cz. on March 14th applied irectly to the Czech social-democracy, to the zech Socialist Party and to German socialemocracy in Czecho-Slovakia with concrete proosals for a joint struggle against hunger, fascism nd war. Using as a starting point the fact that ascism will not stop at the border line of Czecho-Slovakia and is already directly menacing the Czecho-Slovakian working class also, that the mpoverishment of the masses is assuming tremendous proportions and the war danger is ecoming more and more threatening, the C.C. f the C.P.Cz. challenged the three parties menioned to a joint struggle, despite all existing olitical antagonisms between them, against the offensive of the capitalists, against fascism and he imperialist war danger.

The C.C. proposed to elect joint committees in he factories and localities to lead the struggle of he workers, without distinction of Party membership. These committees are to organise the struggle for the concrete demands of the workers, from protest meetings to political mass strikes. If necessary they are to call a nation-wide proletarian congress to organise this joint struggle, and ask for replies indicating if and when the representatives of the parties addressed would be ready to come together in a joint conference to consider these proposals. The reply of the social-democratic workers to these proposals was that in hundreds of localities and factories they simply no longer allowed their leaders to prevent their joining the united front which thus was actually created. They emphatically demanded that their leaders accept the united front proposal of the C.P.Cz. This movement assumed such proportions that the bourgeoisie, in its fight, peremptorily and categorically forbade the social-democratic leaders to yield in any way to the sentiments prevailing among their members. "Venkov," the organ of Prime Minister Malypeter, wrote excitedly:

> "We maintain that any collaboration between a party in the coalition government" (all three parties asked to join the united front are in the government—K.) "and the Fascists or Communists should automatically entail their exclusion from the government coalition, as no party in the government may ally itself with enemies of democracy and the state. . . . It is likewise impermissible that any union between the Second and Third Internationals affect our domestic political relations."

This direct prohibition of the united front by the Czech bourgeoisie was indeed complied with by the Social-Democratic leaders, just as a dog will obey its master, but the masses of the Social-Democratic workers did not submit. In numerous factories the united front proposal of the C.P.Cz. was accepted by the Social-Democratic workers at factory meetings and joint committees of struggle were elected. In hundreds of localities Fascist meetings were attended by Social-Democratic and Communist workers who succeeded in winning the majority to their side and in converting the meetings into anti-Fascist demonstrations.

Immense mass meetings and demonstrations in favour of the united front have been taking place throughout the entire country. The united front movement against Fascism has been gaining much ground, especially in the German districts of Czecho-Slovakia. Here Hitler's storm troops repeatedly forced their way across the Czech borderline, abducted, maltreated and shot at Social-Democratic workers. Hitler's storm troops joined the Czech gendarmes who were hunting down the German fugitives and were seeking to scent out the transport of anti-Fascist literature in the Czecho-Slovakian border towns. The Nazis in Czecho-Slovakia, become giddy by the bloody deeds of their German "compatriots," behaved in the most provocative manner and did their utmost to erect an "anti-Marxist front" also in Czecho-Slovakia to take in all German bourgeois parties. As a result of all this the Social-Democratic workers simply could no longer be restrained from accepting the Communist united front proposal. In the struggle against Fascism they forged the proletarian united front with the Communists on a large scale. During the last few weeks the German Bohemian cities witnessed militant united front demonstrations in which tens of thousands participated. In the territory of Czecho-Slovakia the united front, despite the resistance of the leaders, reached its most perfect form. In view of these facts, under the pressure of their own followers, there was nothing left for the Social-Democratic leaders to do but to participate in the joint actions so as not to be crowded out altogether.

The united front proposals of the C.P.Cz. and the great and successful offensive to establish a united front for the joint struggle against the bourgeoisie in the exceptionally acute situation existing once more confronted the Social-Demo-

cratic leaders before the entire working class with the alternative:

"Either to continue with the bourgeoisie against the workers, or to join the workers in their proletarian united front against the bourgeoisie!"

With tense excitement the Social-Democratic workers awaited the reply of their leaders to this question. As was to be expected they once more declared before the entire working class that they will continue to march with the bourgeoisie against the working class and declined the united front proposal of the C.P.Cz. The effects of this decision on the Social-Democratic workers were soon apparent.

Social-Democratic Leaders and State Power in the Struggle Against the Proletarian United Front.

The Czech bourgeoisie fully realised the menace which a proletarian united front would mean to it. In its press it wrote that a united front between the Social-Democrats and the Communists would bring about the same conditions that existed in 1918 and 1919, i.e., the time when the bourgeoisie trembled before the working class, and escaped its doom by a hair's breadth, and only because of the treachery of the Social-Democrats. This explains the strict prohibition against participation in the united front on the part of their Social-Fascist lackeys.

The Social-Fascist leaders promptly obeyed the whistle of its bourgeoisie. All three of the "Social-Democratic" parties officially rejected the clear offer of a joint struggle issued by the C.P.Cz. To explain this step they resorted to every conceivable demagogic pretext. They hypocritically accused the Communists of not being sincere when they speak of a united front, and of only wanting to use this united front to advance their own Party ends. They hypocritically prescribe that the Internationals must unite first, but naturally not to struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat but to defend bourgeois democracy, which is a form of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and from which Fascism organically grows. Their reasoning in declining the united front proposals of the Comintern and the C.P.Cz. is most clearly summarised in the *Pravo Lidu*, the central organ of Czech Social-Democracy:

"To-day the most important task of Social-Democracy in Czecho-Slovakia consists in maintaining a clear and definite line of demarcation between us and the Communists. The incompatibility of Communists and Socialists in our country must be made clear to everyone, so that there may be no confusion in our ranks. Why? The slogan has been launched: 'Fight against all disintegrating elements, against the Fascists.' Who is to wage this war? This is of course, the task and the duty of the positive and constructive elements who are concerned about the state and the republic. The Communists, however, are not concerned with this, for they too represent a disintegrating element. Therefore we must not permit ourselves to be deceived by their present talk. All this means a real and sincere truce between all democratic parties for the period of emergency."

Now everything is clear! The Social-Democratic leaders openly declare that to-day, in the fourth year of the world economic crisis, they will defend the bourgeoisie during the "period of the emergency" with all means at their disposal against the Communists and the entire working class; that moreover they will agree to a "real and sincere" alliance (truce) with all bourgeois capitalist forces. Social-Democracy in Czecho-Slovakia is quite evidently marching quickstep along the road to Fascism, and seeks to overtake the German Social-Democratic Party in this regard.

Simultaneously with its rejection of the united front proposals of the C.P.Cz., Social-Democracy in Czecho-Slovakia, with the aid of its seven "Socialist ministers," mobilises its police force and gendarmes for the purpose of cruelly suppressing the militant united front against hunger, Fascism and war. In Brüx, a coal-mining region, where exactly a year ago the miners defended themselves in a heroic united mass strike, which lasted four weeks, against the coal barons, the state and the Social-Democratic leaders, the local Social-Democratic and Communist Party organisations organised a big joint demonstration against the bloody terror raging in Hitler Germany. Bayonets and loaded guns enforced the prohibition against united front demonstrations in the Brüx district. The same thing happened in Asch, Brünn, Ostrau—throughout the entire country of Czech democracy. The power of the state is to be used to throttle the proletarian united front.

In this they shall not succeed! The rift between the Social-Democratic leaders and workers is already too great. The proletarian united front with the Social-Democratic workers is being formed over the heads of the former with increasing success. Never before was the C.P.Cz. able to penetrate politically so deeply into the Social-Democratic masses; never before were they so successful in strengthening their political influence there. Never before were the

Social-Democratic workers so deeply convinced of the treachery of their leaders; never before did they understand the C.P.Cz. as well as now. Taught by their own experiences and the events of the last few weeks in Germany, the workers of Czecho-Slovakia, led by the C.P.Cz. are unfolding their united front movement to struggle against hunger, Fascism and imperialist war, in which they will ultimately emerge victoriously, triumphing over the Czech bourgeoisie and its Social-Fascist allies.

A FEW CONCLUSIONS.

The struggle for the united front in Czecho-Slovakia has had some consequences of importance to the international working class and all sections of the Comintern. Czech experience confirms, above all, the correctness of the tactics of the Comintern, which admitted of no doubt or illusion that the leaders of Social-Democracy and the Social-Democratic parties are willing, or capable, of conducting a real struggle against the bourgeoisie for the defence of the working class. The present attempt, repeated once more, despite all prior experience, to bring about a united front with the aid of the Social-Democratic parties has had exactly the result that the Comintern had predicted: that the Social-Fascist cohort of leaders is sold body and soul to the bourgeoisie, and serves it to the end without hesitation, in plundering and suppressing the proletariat.

This new confirmation of this fact at the present time, before the eyes of the masses, was very useful in developing the revolutionary movement in all countries. The sections of the C.I. must now, on the basis of the entire past of Social-Democracy and of the latest experiences with it, explain to the Social-Democratic workers with so much the more persistence and conviction that the united front, which they too desire, is possible only in defiance of the Social-Democratic party and over the heads of its leaders. They must tell the workers plainly that they must no longer allow their leaders to prevent them from setting up the united front; that they must break with them and their party if they do not want to become accomplices in the crime which their leaders are committing by splitting the working class, by handing them over to be plundered, by turning them over to Fascism and driving them into a new imperialist war for the defence of their bourgeoisie. The united front from below, against Social-Democracy and over the heads of Social-Democratic leaders, is and will continue to be the only way to weld the working class together in the struggle against the offensive of capitalism, against Fascism and imperialist war.

The main task of the Czech Section, in its struggle to gain the majority of the working class, consists in organising the united front from below still more energetically, bringing in the masses of Social-Democratic workers who are ready to join even to-day; consists in leading the struggles of the working class, at the same time intensifying the struggle against Social-Fascism. The more sternly the C.P.Cz. calls Social-Fascism to account, the sooner it will win the majority of the working class and prepare the victory over the bourgeoisie.

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NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN THE REVOLUTIONARY CRISIS IN CHINA.

By P. Mif.

THE Twelfth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. established the fact of a revolutionary situation in China and the victory of the soviet revolution on a considerable section of its territory. The deep economic crisis in China, which was brought about to a certain extent, and immensely increased, by growing imperialist aggression, has developed into a national, economic catastrophe. The crisis, which monstrously increased the insufferable position of the working masses and brought all the contradictions to a climax, is now stimulating the desire for revolutionary action on the part of the masses, and facilitating the upsurge of the workers' and peasants' movement and the dimensions it has assumed in a manner hitherto unprecedented. At the same time there is a progressive depression in the counter-revolutionary camp of the ruling bourgeoisie, in the camp of the Kuomintang militarists, which is clearing the way for the offensive of the Japanese imperialists and the annexation of part of Chinese territory.

In these circumstances, a revolutionary situation is created in China as a result of the noteworthy victories of the Chinese Red Army, the successful development of the soviet movement and the mighty upsurge of anti-imperialist struggle. The most characteristic fact, which deserves special attention and is doubtless of the greatest historical importance, is the existence, for several years now, of the Chinese soviets and the way they are developing. In spite of all the efforts of the international imperialists and counter-revolutionary, exploiting classes of China, in spite of the enormous forces at their disposal and the means they have put into operation, these enemies of the Chinese people have not only been unable to throttle the soviet movement as they desired, but have failed even temporarily to stop the straightforward, regular development of the soviet revolution in China. For several years now the Chinese soviets have managed to hold out against international imperialism, have borne the blows of the imperialists, Chinese landlords and the bourgeoisie, have resisted the attacks of the Kuomintang troops, and have suppressed the internal counter-revolutionary plots which continue to increase and spread.

The successes of the soviet movement in China are of special, exclusive importance in the face of the rapacious war of Japanese imperialism and the way in which the Kuomintang has most foully and treacherously betrayed the vital, fundamental interests of the Chinese people. But these successes, in turn, would not have been possible had not the whole attention in China changed in general and become more revolutionary; had there not been a mighty change in the workers' and peasants' movement; and had there been no mighty upsurge of the anti-imperialist struggle. Let us now examine the new developments which characterise the last few months of struggle of the working class and peasant masses of China.

I.—THE WORKING-CLASS MOVEMENT ON CHINESE KUOMINTANG TERRITORIES.

The following figures give a picture of the extent of the strike movement during the last few years on the Kuomintang territories of China :—

1923	...	35,835	took part in strikes.
1924	...	61,860	,, ,,
1925	...	403,334	,, ,,
		784,821*	,, ,,
1926	...	539,585	,, ,,
1928	...	400,000	,, ,,
1929	...	700,000	,, ,,
1930	...	387,000†	,, ,,
1931	...	772,477	,, ,,
1932	...	1,110,170‡	,, ,,

To this should be added 18 militant demonstrations on the part of the unemployed, which took place during 1932 and in which 138 thousand workers took part. These figures speak most clearly and eloquently of the undoubted growth and enormous extent of the working-class strike movement in China. Year by year more and more workers are being drawn into the strike struggle.

But for us, not only is this purely numerical increase in the number of strikes, and participators in the strike struggle of importance. It is useful to deal with the wealthy experiences gained in the struggle and with the new points in connection with the working-class movement in China, which show that it is just this struggle which impels the Chinese working class forward to its position at the head of the anti-imperialist movement, and urges it to assume the leading

* The second figure includes strikes which spread in connection with the famous events of May 30, 1925.

† Figures far from complete.

‡ Of this total figure, over 700,000 are connected with strikes which included demonstrations, the seizure of workshops, and other serious forms of struggle.

rôle in the struggle of the Chinese people, as a whole, for the independence, integrity and unity of China.

In dealing with these new points we must, first of all, emphasise the *extreme stubbornness* displayed by the Chinese proletariat in the strike struggle. We may indicate several repeated strikes. For instance, the Kailan miners, consisting of a huge body of 40 thousand workers, went on strike five times during 1931 and finally won a shortening of the working day from ten to nine hours; then in 1932 the same miners went on strike four times, and won more improvements in their conditions of work. Seven thousand workers in an Anglo-American tobacco company went on strike three times in 1931,and twice in 1932. The tramway workers of the French settlement (in Shanghai) went on strike three times. It would be easy to multiply the number of examples of this kind, and they all prove sufficiently conclusively the extreme stubbornness displayed by the Chinese proletariat in their struggle. Strikes are called once, twice, three times, until the workers' demands are satisfied.

The second thing which is characteristic of the last few months of the strike struggle in China is the *wave of general strikes* which swept through separate branches of industry. In February, 1932, forty thousand workers in Japanese textile factories went on strike. In July of the same year there was a general strike of workers in the silk industries of Shanghai. In June, all the telephonists came out in Shanghai. In May there was a general strike of postmen. Again, we are merely taking a few examples to characterise this new point in the working-class movement of China, when solidarity strikes break out, when they transfer themselves from one factory to another, and finally expand into strikes in whole branches of industry.

Further, it would be well to mention the *militant spirit shown during strikes* of late, the methods of revolutionary resistance adopted by the workers in the strike struggle in retaliation against the bestial terror of the factory owners, the Kuomintang government, the foreign and Chinese police, and the troops. In the majority of cases, during strikes, the workers nowadays do not leave the factory premises. They remain in the factories, seize the offices, hold the members of the administration prisoners, and offer stubborn resistance to the police and the troops. There have been more than a few cases when the strikers have driven the directors and managers of the works into their own midst, and thus disarmed the police and the troops, who were afraid to open fire upon the crowd of strikers for fear of wounding or otherwise harming the captured representatives of the administration and factory owners.

Several other strikes are accompanied by bloody conflicts with the Kuomintang trade union bureaucrats and the Chinese police. A few examples. In January, 1932, ten thousand workers in the Madyagao mines were on strike against the adamant refusal of the administration to pay bonuses, and during the strike they disarmed the men guarding the mines, seized the engine-room, the electrical power station and the office, held the administration prisoners, and forced a detachment of police to leave the pits. In the winter of 1932 six thousand strikers in the Yunnan factories in China, after one of their meetings, attacked a detachment of policemen who had arrived, seized the factory, smashed part of the machinery, and wrought havoc in the offices and lodgings of the administration. The troops called out to help the police shot down five workers and wounded several dozens more. During this strike the leader of the Kuomintang factory committee was killed by the workers. The strike of the Shanghai tramway workers recently came to an end; during this strike the workers seized the depots and the offices of the administrative board, with all members of the administration, and resisted the attempts of the police to clear the strikers off the premises for several days.

Another new feature in the strike movement in China, which is worth remembering, is that the workers have begun *to put their own demands into operation themselves*. For instance, in 1932 the workers of a Shanghai printshop went on strike twice and were unable to achieve any success. Thereupon, in an organised manner they began to introduce the eight-hour working day, and no efforts on the part of the owners to break the organisational strength of the workers, and liquidate the victory which the workers had made for themselves were of any avail whatsoever. Neither by strike-breaking activities, nor by threats of arrests and so on, were the factory-owners able to stop the advance of the workers.

It would be well to dwell once more on one feature of considerable importance. Recently there have been several strikes in China during which *Mass Strike Committees* were elected. In one case a strike committee of 200 persons was elected, in another case a committee of 150 persons. At first sight it would seem that such a large numerical composition would be clumsy and only complicate the task of leading the strike. But in actual fact the position is a little different. Up to quite recently the Communists in China have come into contact with a state of affairs where the strike committees, as a general rule, have always been arrested, in cases where the majority

on them did not consist of representatives of yellow trade unions. And when the strike committees were chiefly composed of representatives of the yellow Kuomintang trade unions, they usually took over the leadership of strikes only for the purpose of betraying them. Now, in the new state of affairs in China, when a mass strike committee is elected, the police find it difficult to fight against it, because to arrest a strike committee of 150-200 members is considerably more difficult than to arrest a strike committee of 5-10 members. On the other hand, the treacherous work of the leaders of the yellow trade union bureaucrats is rendered more difficult, since they are constantly working in the revolutionary atmosphere generated by the mood of the working masses. In any case, this experiment is being introduced in China and has so far produced good results.

The enormous increase in the number of strikes has occurred against the general background of a rise in the tide of the anti-imperialist struggle. A considerable number of strikes are of a clearly *political and anti-imperialist character.* The general strike in Mukden, Fushun, Anshan, in connection with the occupation of Manchuria by the Japanese imperialists, as well as the strikes in Japanese factories in several Chinese towns during the famous Shanghai defence, have demonstrated the militant preparedness of the Chinese proletariat for a decisive struggle against Japanese interventionists, and against the imperialist yoke.

It is thanks to these strikes alone that the working class of China has become the vanguard of the developing anti-imperialist struggle. In 1931, 74 per cent. of all conflicts were of an economic nature. In 1932, economic motives continued to remain the basis of the strike struggle, but nevertheless the struggle was becoming more political, and already about 35 per cent. of the total number of participators in the strike movement were connected with strikes in which demands of a political character were prevalent. To this must be added the fact that recent strikes in China show an increase in the working-class territories, and that they no longer remain concentrated as before primarily in Shanghai, but are spreading to the north and south, and embracing the workers of the most important industrial centres. Whereas in 1931 only about 18 per cent. of all participators in strikes were from the north or the south, in 1932 the figure was increased to no less than 32 per cent.

Further, it is essential that attention be paid to the link between the strike struggle and the *unemployment movement.* Several facts go to prove that the Chinese Communist Party has now undertaken serious work in connection with the organisation of the unemployed masses and giving guidance in their struggle. In November, 1932, six thousand unemployed printers in Shanghai were able to obtain payment of unemployment benefits. Sailors dismissed from 13 ships standing in Shanghai docks made an organised demand that they be returned to the ships, and were successful. In Shantung province a strike of ten thousand miners took place in mines which had already been closed down. They took over the control of the mines offices and were able, partially, to get work started again in the pits. Under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party a conference of unemployed workers from the silk factories in Shanghai took place, which included twenty thousand workers. Further, fifteen thousand workers in the silk industry in Wusi—the second most important silk industrial centre after Shanghai—who had been deprived of their work, began to seize the factories in the spring of 1932 and made organised protests against closing down factories and the non-payment of benefits; as a result they obtained the partial re-opening of the factories and the payment of small unemployment benefits. In Tientsin the unemployed railwaymen, in trying to obtain payment of unemployment benefits, more than once took possession of the railway termini and the offices of the railway administration.

This mighty upsurge in the working-class movement on Kuomintang territory is taking place side by side with *the increasing leadership* of the Chinese Communist Party in strike struggles of the working class. Whereas previously the overwhelming majority of strikes were spontaneous, in 1932 not less than one-third of the total number of strikes was headed by the Chinese Communist Party. In their work on Kuomintang territory, the red trade unions have been able to bring about a serious change for the better. In Shanghai the number of members of red trade unions has increased nine times. And it it characteristic of the times that when on September 18th, 1932, the anniversary of the occupation of Manchuria, a campaign was set on foot to recruit new members to the red trade unions, the estimated plan was exceeded by several thousand.

A conference of textile workers took place in Shanghai on September, 1932. One hundred and twenty workers were present, representing thirty-two of the largest textile factories in Shanghai. As a result of this conference the textile workers union was formed, which now includes the overwhelming mass of workers in the textile factories of Shanghai. The forces of the revolutionary trade union organisation among the tobacco workers have also strengthened and

become established organisationally; groups of red trade unions have also considerably extended their influence among the workers in town factories. For the first time for several years the revolutionary trade union organisations have won positions for themselves among the railwaymen. The red trade unions are beginning to extend their influence beyond the boundaries of Shanghai.

True, the red trade unions have still very much to do in overcoming the very big shortcomings in their work, for they have not yet entirely reorganised and re-adapted their organisations to suit the growing mass struggle, or sufficiently increased their work inside the factories; they have not yet become truly mass unions, or obtained the decisive rôle in the organisation and leadership of the strike struggle; they have not, once and for all, done away with their under-estimation of the importance of work inside the yellow trade unions, for the purpose of winning the working masses to their side who are members of these unions. But, without doubt, the red trade unions are now on the road to ridding themselves of all these shortcomings, and overcoming their habit of lagging behind the struggle of the working class. And, in consequence, the anti-imperialist movement has been given a strong, proletarian framework which guarantees that it will develop victoriously.

2.—THE PEASANT MOVEMENT ON CHINESE KUOMINTANG TERRITORIES.

The peasant masses in the Kuomintang territories of China are doomed to slow death by starvation as a result of imperialist oppression, militarist plunder, the yoke of the landlords and the monstrous economic crisis. This has meant that ever vaster masses of the peasantry in Kuomintang territories are rising to fight for their vital interests; the struggle itself is assuming a more violent shape; and the time when this struggle will be linked up with the struggle of the workers' and peasants' Red Army and the soviet movement of the central and southern provinces of China is coming nearer and nearer. It is sufficient to examine the following facts published in the bourgeois press to be convinced of the correctness of this conclusion. In the summer of 1932 a wave of hunger riots spread throughout the Kuomintang territories. It covered the silk area of the Kiangsu and Chekiang provinces. In May, 1932, a two-months' struggle took place of insurgent peasants in Szusian, North Anhwei. In the Shensi, Honan and other provinces, enormous streams of hungry refugees join in all kinds of armed demonstrations of the masses of workers and peasants. In Szechwan province, in the Ta-chu and Lin-shui districts, towards the end of 1932, over ten thousand peasants rose up in revolt. In Kiangsu province in December, 1932, a demonstration of over ten thousand peasants took place in the environments of Shanghai against the confiscation of their lands in payment of debts.

The soviet movement is now spreading to those parts of China which previously knew only spontaneous, unorganised, peasant struggles, deprived of any sort of proletarian leadership. In the beginning of 1932, the twenty-fourth corps of the Chinese Workers' and Peasants' Red Army was created in North China. This was the first organised military force of the workers and peasants in North China. In October, 1932, again in North China on the border of the Kansu and Shensi provinces, the twenty-sixth corps of the Chinese Red Army was created, which now occupies nine administrative areas and is stationed with three large and twenty-seven small detachments. In the Kiangsu province three thousand peasants revolted on October 24th, 1932. They attacked the local government institutions, set free 47 persons, destroyed all the official documents in the county court, and so on.

In the middle of October an uprising occurred among the peasants in 50 sections of the Ji Chow administrative area (south-west of the Shantung province), who at first refused to pay land-rent, and then organised soviets and re-distribution of the lands of the landlords. On the basis of these facts it is not difficult to judge of the forms in which the peasant struggle expresses itself of late on the Kuomintang territories of China. *The peasant masses in the northern provinces of China have begun to make common cause with the soviet movement.* But not only this is characteristic. There is yet another new feature which deserves attention in the present stage of revolutionary struggle in China, and that is *the uprising of several tribes from among the non-Chinese nationalities of China,* mercilessly exploited and oppressed by the imperialists, and by Chinese landlord, moneylending elements, which uprising was led by the Communist Party against the Kuomintang government. It is well known that for several years there has been a continuous armed struggle, at times very violent, at other times somnolent, in the North of China, of the so-called Moslem tribes, who bring millions of the masses into the movement against the Chinese militarists. According to the latest information these tribes have occupied the town of Aksu, which is a most important centre. Up to now the rôle of the Communists in this movement has been most insignificant. It is quite otherwise with the uprising of the national tribes, which took place in the beginning of 1933 in the Hunan and Kwangsi and Cweichow provinces, and,

according to Reuter's agency, is organised and led by the Communists, and consists of something like fifty thousand armed fighters.

The picture of the growing revolutionary movement in China would be incomplete without mention of the *partisan fighting* in Manchuria and Jehol, which is attaining more and more importance. True, of late, the Japanese imperialists have been successful in breaking up the main groupings of generals, which had previously been warring against them in Manchuria. General Ma, General Su Wen, General Li Tu and General Liu Kai-tui all suffered this fate.

But in spite of this defeat of the most prominent leaders of the anti-Japanese movement, mass partisan warfare has not only not stopped, but on the contrary, continues to grow; and already there are no fewer than two hundred and fifty thousand peasants in armed struggle against the Japanese troops of occupation.

2.—THE ANTI-IMPERIALIST MOVEMENT.

Since the time of the occupation of Manchuria by the Japanese imperialists, there has been a mighty upsurge in the anti-imperialist struggle in China. Every new, plundering step on the part of the Japanese militarists evoked an ever-mightier outburst of anti-imperialist struggle, bringing more and more vast masses of toilers into the struggle against the Japanese interventionists. The Chinese proletariat has launched a heroic struggle against the Japanese imperialists. The general strike in Mukden, Fushun, Anshan and the Japanese factories in Shanghai and other industrial centres, the innumerable street demonstrations and other active anti-imperialist activities of the Chinese proletariat, have met with a broad response throughout the country and made the anti-imperialist movement the centre of struggle against the Japanese interventionists. The student movement, the volunteer and partisan movement, the movement of the urban poor, have all grown, and have become more revolutionary. The boycott movement is becoming very extensive, and the anti-imperialist feeling among the rank and file soldiers in the Kuomintang army is also increasing.

In spite of the different manoeuvres used by the Kuomintang leaders to camouflage their treachery and maintain their influence, millions of toilers in China have become utterly convinced of the treacherous, capitulating part played by the Kuomintang leaders. Side by side with the loss of all national-reformist illusions and Kuomintang influence, we find among the vast masses that the slogan of the Communist Party, the slogan of the national-revolutionary struggle of the armed population against the Japanese and other imperialists for Chinese independence, integrity and unity, is becoming more popular, and mobilising the masses for the struggle.

Extremely favourable conditions exist at present for successful activities on the part of the Chinese Communist Party. And the Party is doing its very utmost to solve the complicated and responsible tasks which confront it. It seeks to spread its influence to the utmost and to give it organisational shape. It is organising vast masses for the struggle against the imperialists and the Kuomintang. By breaking through the legal restrictions of the Kuomintang, it is now launching out with mass anti-imperialist leagues, and anti-Japanese societies, and has taken upon itself the organisation of social assistance to the volunteer movement, etc.

In the work of further developing the anti-imperialist movement and gaining the leadership of the mass struggle, no little part is played by the manifesto in which the Chinese Soviet Government and the Revolutionary Military Soviet appealed to the Chinese people, and which went the round of the Chinese press. This manifesto points to the attempts of the Japanese imperialists, supported by English and French imperialists, to dismember the whole of China and to enslave it completely. In it the treacherous rôle of the Kuomintang in suppressing the anti-imperialist movement, and in surrendering one position after another to the imperialists for further imperialist aggression, is strongly condemned. But at the same time the following most important declaration is made:

> "The Soviet Government of China and the Revolutionary Military Soviet of the Chinese Red Armies declare before the whole of the Chinese people that:
>
> "The Red Army is prepared to enter into operative-military agreement with any army or army unit for the purpose of fighting against the Japanese invasion, subject to the following conditions: (1) immediate cessation of the advance upon Soviet districts; (2) democratic rights to be given to the people immediately (i.e., freedom of meeting, organisation, speech, press, etc.), and (3) immediate arming of the people, creation of armed detachments of volunteers for the fight for Chinese independence and unity."*

The reaction of the Chinese bourgeois press to this manifesto is particularly interesting. For instance, V. Paniall, in his article on February 21st, 1933, in the "Peking and Tientsin Times," entitled "Dramatic Turn of Events," writes as follows:

* Quotation from the "North China News" of January 15, 1933.

"A further characteristic feature is the manifesto of the Chinese Soviet Government in Kiangsi in which the latter declares itself ready to collaborate, in offering resistance to Japan, with the Kuomintang on condition, however, that the 'period of political preparation' be abolished and at the same time democratic rights be given to the people. If the crisis becomes more acute, then we may expect that agreement on this basis, and in this direction, will be achieved between Nanking and the Reds."

In another article entitled "If I were Chang Kai-shi," from the pen of Dr. V. Tin, a Chinese author, we find the following:

"It is essential that we get the help and collaboration of the Chinese Communists on one single condition that an obligation be taken that neither the Government army nor the Communists, should attack each other during the campaign against the Japanese."*

The Manifesto of the Chinese Soviet Government was subjected to broad discussion in the columns of the Chinese press. Although only indirectly, nevertheless it reflects without any doubt the matured desire of the great masses for unity in the national revolutionary movement for the independence and integrity of China. However, the authors of this manifesto can hardly be reckoning upon any positive answer from the Nanking leaders. Although this manifesto gives proof of the really strong desire of the Chinese Red Army to enter into armed struggle against the Japanese imperialists and so defend China, it at the same time is directed against the evil demagogy of the Kuomintang, which strives to create the impression among the masses that the Kuomintang is deprived of any opportunity of fighting against the Japanese troops, because of the activities of the Chinese Red Army. But the chief aim of the manifesto is to fight for the unity of all the toiling peoples of China in deeds, to offer resistance to the imperialist robbers. Its task is to rally a still vaster mass of toilers under the slogan of the national revolutionary struggle of the armed people against the Japanese and other imperialists. At the same time the manifesto once more confirms the fact that only the Soviets can save China, and that the force which is capable of defending China is being mobilised in the Soviet territories.

4.—THE SOVIET MOVEMENT IN CHINA.

Already for more than four years an obdurate armed struggle has been going on between insurgent masses of workers and peasants in parts of the southern and central provinces of China, under the leadership of the Communist Party, and the Kuomintang government troops. Nanking has waged four campaigns against the Soviet districts, with the active support of the imperialists, and they have all ended in the complete defeat of the government troops. Now the fifth general campaign is being made against the Soviet regions of China. At the beginning of the campaign, Chang Kai-shi concentrated an army of six hundred and eighty thousand soldiers, pushed back to some extent the Red Army units from Wuhan, and compelled the Fourth Red Army to retreat from Honan, Hupeh, and the Anhwei district. This gave Chang Kai-shi an opportunity of boasting about the complete victory he had gained over the Red Army and of the speedy, final, annihilation of Communism in China.

Actually, to talk of the defeat of the Chinese Red Army is absolutely out of the question. It is true that the Fourth Army, under pressure from the superior forces of the enemy, was compelled to leave its previous base. But it managed to bring all its main, fighting forces out of the battle in good order, and to make a heroic march across the south of the Shensi province into the North-East part of the Szechwan province, to take possession of several centres there, and to spread its influence throughout the district, which was superior to the district which it had previously occupied on the borderline between the Hupeh and Honan provinces.

Despite the fact that the Fourth Red Army was greatly exhausted as a result of this march, according to information published in the bourgeois press, it routed the 29th corps of the government troops (two divisions were routed, and two came over to the side of the Reds). The Fourth Army is now becoming the centre, in the district, which attracts and brings together all revolutionary forces. It is not, therefore, surprising that the local militia corps (10,000 strong), flung out the red flag and joined the Red Army. The peasant movement, which is most noticeably developing in this province of recent years, is in favour at present of joining in the struggle of the Fourth Red Army. One cannot but notice extremely positive prospects in connection with the coming struggles of the Fourth Red Army in the Szechwan province, and the strengthening of the Soviet base there.

As for the Second Red Army, commanded by Ho-lun, according to the Chinese press, it has now won back all the districts it previously occupied, without suffering any severe losses.

In the central Soviet district the First and Third armies have managed to unite with the Tenth Corps, thus forming a menace to Nanchan

* "Peking and Tientsin Times." 'January 24, 1933.

from the North-East. And according to information from the Chinese bourgeois press, they have been successful, in several battles, in routing several government divisions. Thus in the end of November, 1932, the Twenty-third, Twenty-fourth and Twenty-seventh divisions of the Nanking troops were routed, on December the Fifth, the Fourteenth and the Nineteenth divisions were defeated and routed, and in February, 1933, two more government divisions were defeated.

If we summarise the results of the Fifth Campaign of the Kuomintang against the Soviet districts, which campaign is still going on, we find that there is no reason to speak of the defeat of the Chinese Red Army. On the contrary, the successes in Szechwan and the central Soviet district, side by side with the creation of new Soviet bases, only prove the success of the Chinese Red Army's struggle and the complete hopelessness of the attempt made by the Kuomintang to suppress the Soviet movement and destroy the workers' and peasants' Chinese Red Army.

What are the tactics used by the Chinese Red Army when it goes into military action? This question is of exclusive interest, since the tactics adopted by the Red Army have been brilliantly justified throughout the whole of the struggles that have already taken place against the superior forces of the enemy. What is the essence of these tactics? The Chinese Red Army is campaigning to defend Soviet territory, which is particularly important as regards the central Soviet district, where the central provisional government is at present situated. But, at the same time, the Red Army maintains its mobility and does not remain inside the territory if by so doing it would suffer severe losses. It avoids disadvantageous conflicts with the greater forces of the enemy, and adopts the tactic of enticing the enemy into the heart of its own districts to deprive it of its advantages in the sense of united military leadership, communications, supplies, etc. Moreover, by causing it considerable annoyance and demoralising it by its partisan warfare, and through the influence of the revolutionary peasantry upon the rank and file soldiers, which splits up the forces of the enemy, the Red Army successfully routs the enemy by delivering unexpected blows in the flank and the rear. It is this tactic which, up to now, has to a considerable extent, decided the success of the Chinese Red Army. Its chief aim is to maintain and reinforce its own fighting forces, to encourage the rapid formation of fresh Red Army units, and to strengthen the political and military leadership. The Chinese Communists are quite clear in their minds as to the great part which the Chinese Red Army must play in the coming struggles as a mighty level which will raise the revolutionary movement high throughout the land, as a force which is capable, of a certainty of safeguarding the subsequent, victorious development of the Chinese revolution.

In order to complicate the position of the enemy and to facilitate everything in connection with the struggle of the Chinese Red Army, the Chinese Communists aim at creating new Soviet bases. The fact that there already exist Soviet districts and that new Soviet bases are being created should not mean that the line should not be taken of uniting the adjacent Soviet districts. The Chinese Communists, while striving to gain control of the towns inside the Soviet districts which continue to constitute reactionary strongholds, at the same time make a correct estimate of the position, of the relation of forces, and do not seek to seize the large industrial and administrative centres of the country, but limit themselves to the tactic of encircling them, of taxing them, and thus demoralise and weaken the forces of the enemy.

Let us now turn to the economic situation in the Soviet districts. Without doubt, the toiling masses in the Soviet districts have been able to achieve very significant improvements in their living conditions; the oppression of the militarists has gone for ever, the slavery of the imperialists, landlords and moneylenders is liquidated, the eight-hour working day has been established, wages have risen and the peasants have been given the lands of the landlords. Still, the economic situation in the Soviet districts, which of late has worsened somewhat, has to a certain extent reduced the effect of these gains.

Previously, the state of economy in the Soviet districts was characterised by the so-called "scissors"—a divergence in the prices of industrial goods on the one hand, and agricultural, on the other. While there is a superfluity of agricultural products and the prices are low, the Soviet districts feel an acute need as regards industrial commodities, the prices of which are two or three times higher than usual. Now in several districts there is an insufficiency of agricultural products as well as the previous lack of industrial goods. There are several factors which go to explain why the situation is worse in certain parts. The chief reason is connected with the fact that for several years an obdurate armed struggle has been going on on Chinese Soviet territories, which has led to the partial destruction of the productive forces by the Kuomintang troops, and a curtailment in the sown area, etc. On the other hand, the economi

ockade of Soviet districts put through by the anking Government is also having effect. In rtain parts, moreover, there have been addi-onal calamities in the form of inundations, of botage, and of internal counter-revolutionary tivities on the part of exploiting elements. The sk of supplying the Red Army is considerably ore difficult and complicated than before. On ne one hand it has grown numerically and, on ie other hand, its previous sources of supply confiscation of the property of the gentry, the ndlords and rich peasants) are to a large extent xhausted.

Moreover, the fact that the districts are not table units must also be taken into considera-ion, which means that the government apparatus as to work in abnormal conditions, and also the act that fighting is almost always going on, which means that the economic government rgans and the local Soviets find it difficult to arry on their normal functions. And in the conomy itself all kinds of processes are going on which may be characterised as a growth in he elements of natural economy. The compara-ively backward economy of these districts (small easant farms, handicraft production and, at the est, mere small-scale manufacturing industries) n itself creates certain real difficulties in the work f supplying the population and the army with constant stream of necessary products. And ast, but not least, the right-opportunist and left nistakes which were manifested during the actual uilding up of the Chinese Soviets, could not but eflect adversely upon the general state of economy and the material position of the masses.

All these factors made it incumbent upon the Chinese Party to take up seriously once more oth economic and political questions concerning he Soviet districts, and to introduce exactness nd corrections in its policy. The Chinese Com-munist Party has planned several measures, the ntroduction of which, in the Soviet districts, should mean a development in industry, and a evival in market relations and the trade turn-ver. What are these measures, briefly?

The Chinese Communist Party recommends hat repeated redistribution of lands should be voided, except where it is necessary for essential easons. Up to the present, there have been not nfrequent cases where new redistribution of land as taken place, in certain localities, almost every hree or four months.

The new decision should mean that land, after listribution, will be firmly attached to the peas-nt, which should be of good effect in the sense hat the peasants will have a stimulus to work etter on their land, and to develop agricultural roduction.

Further, the party proposes that the Soviets should refrain from confiscating the means of production of all kulaks without exception. This measure should be adopted only towards partici-pators in all kinds of counter-revolutionary activities. The rest of the kulaks should main-tain the right to make use of their own means of production. True, the local Soviets should at the same time keep control over these kulaks to ensure that they do not rent out their means of production, at exorbitant rates of payment or subject to serflike conditions. As we know, Soviet legislation covers not only confiscation of all the lands of the landlords, but also the taking over of the surplus lands belonging to the kulaks, and their distribution among the peasants. The kulak who is not concerned in counter-revolu-tionary activities against the Soviets has a plot of land put at his disposal, but not from among the best lands and only on condition that he him-self agrees to engage in agriculture. In many cases the local comrades interpreted this point of the law to mean that the kulak is prohibited from buying or renting land and from using wage labour. The new instructions of the Chinese Communist Party explain that, while the previ-ous conditions of kulak land distribution remain in force, this does not mean that the buying or renting of land and the hiring of labour power by the well-to-do strata of the peasantry is to be prohibited. In the interests of developing com-modity production, the renting and purchase of land and the hiring of labour power must be per-mitted. But again, this must take place under the strict control of the local Soviets, in order to prevent the revival of the previous feudal, serf-like conditions.

In the same interests of developing agricultural production and safeguarding the interests of the agricultural proletariat, temporary regulations should be made for the farm labourers, having in view the seasonal character of their work, and adopting a differentiated approach to the question of their wage labour, according to whether they are working for the kulak or the middle peasant. The Party calls upon all local organisations to pay the maximum attention to the question of sowing, of harvesting, and of social services.

These are the measures planned in connection with production. As for the encouragement of handicrafts and home industries, the party recom-mends that the interests of the workers in these industries should be linked up with class interests as a whole, with the question of raising the economy of the Soviet districts, with the question of the military operations of the Red Army. Temporary regulations should be worked out for

apprentices and workers in handicraft and home industries, which should take the form of an addition to the labour legislation to suit the special conditions of small handicrafts and home industries. At the same time certain essential changes should be made in connection with a certain mitigation of the taxation policy, in order that this step may help to raise local production. Of course, the local party and trade union organisations should develop the mass working class movement and carry on work in defence of labour. But this should be combined with the general economic conditions, with the interests of the Red Army's struggle. It is not essential that every conflict should lead up to a strike; there are many forms of struggle which can be used; and in any case all the more important serious conflicts which affect the interests of production and of the Red Army, should be handed over for consideration to the organs of labour of the Executive Committee, together with representatives from the owners and the trade unions of the enterprises where the conflict exists.

At the same time the local party and Soviet organs should pay special attention to the further development of the co-operative movement, to establishing discipline as regards the budget, to introducing a régime of economy; and every effort should be made to prevent any depreciation of currency.

The economic policy pursued in the Soviet districts should be radically different, because of the labour and living conditions of the peasants, which differ from the situation of the toiling masses in the Kuomintang territories of China. It is especially important to show this demonstrative character of the economic policy in cases when the Red Army is passing through big territories, without settling there. The work of making a radical re-examination of all social relations in these circumstances may play an enormous rôle in the work of mobilising broad masses of toilers under the banner of the workers' and peasants' Soviet revolution in China.

KUOMINTANG'S NEW METHODS OF PROVOCATION

THE Kuomintang, to date, continues to use white terror in its most bloody, merciless, ferocious form, in its fight against all manifestations of the revolutionary movement, and especially against the Communist movement. The chief methods of struggle used by the Kuomintang against the Communist movement in China are inhuman tortures in the Kuomintang torture-chambers, shootings, beheadings and the physical annihilation of the best revolutionary fighters. As the Soviet revolution in China develops increasingly, as the wave of the working class movement in Kuomintang China rises higher and higher, as the national indignation against the government of national disgrace and treason — the Nanking Government — grows greater, as the front of anti-imperialist struggle closes up its ranks more firmly in Kuomintang China as well as Soviet China—so the hangmen of the Kuomintang are more violent, more merciless in their actions. Tens and tens of thousands of revolutionary fighters have fallen victims to the counter-revolutionary fury of the Kuomintang butchers. But prisons, tortures, white terror, executions and shootings could not keep back the rising tide of the revolutionary movement in China, which has already developed into a big crisis on a national scale, and to a revolutionary crisis in several of the most important parts of the country.

Kuomintang white terror is raging most violently in the warfields where fighting is going on between the Red Army and the Kuomintang, and in the Soviet districts. On the Soviet territories which have temporarily, in the course of battle, fallen into the hands of the Kuomintang, terror is raging on a scale hitherto unprecedented. There the Kuomintang butchers are annihilating not only the Communists who were left behind in these districts evacuated by the Red Army, but also the active Soviet and trade union workers and tens of thousands of non-party workers, poor peasants and coolies, who in one way or another have shown signs of sympathy towards the revolutionary movement. Hundreds and thousands of people have been buried alive; whole villages have been burned down; women, children and old people are being murdered. The "Kuomintang Committees for Restoring the Villages," so-called, are inflicting bloody, atrocious punishments in order to throttle the Soviet movement. White terror is especially rife in the biggest centres, where the Kuomintang hangmen have set themselves the task of physic-

lly annihilating the best, most active revolutionary representatives of the working class.

All these methods, however, have been unable to stop the growth and development of the Soviet revolution and the extension of the Soviet districts. As a result of the fifth campaign, the Chang Kai-shi troops have succeeded in pressing back the Red Army in the Anhwei province, and have delivered a blow at the Red Army under the leadership of Comrade Ho-lun. But the main units of the Red Army in the Kiangsi province have gained a big victory and extended the central Soviet district to the very gates of Nanchan. Then, in the Szechwan province a new Soviet district has grown up; the Red Army led by Ho-lun has begun a counter-attack and already gained possession of a more extensive stretch of territory than the Soviet district which it left behind during the fifth campaign. On the boundary between the Kwangsu and Shansi provinces, the Soviet district is also extending. In the industrial centres the Communist Party is growing and strengthening; its influence upon the working class movement and the anti-imperialist movement is growing stronger and stronger.

It is obvious, therefore, that the Kuomintang has had to make use of new methods in its fight against the Chinese Communist Party. The latest method is the foullest, lowest kind of provocation. It consists of attempts to demoralise the Chinese Communist Party, to bring lack of confidence, suspicions, dissatisfaction, into the ranks of the Party. Recently the Kuomintang published several statements in the Chinese and imperialist press of China, which they declared were the utterances of prominent members of the Chinese Communist Party, to the effect that they refuse to work any longer in the ranks of the Chinese Communist Party, and are transferring to the Kuomintang. A few facts will be sufficient to characterise this new, foul method of provocation, and to show the true worth of all the statements which have been published in the Kuomintang press.

On February 20-24, 1932, there appeared simultaneously in all the Shanghai newspapers and also in the Tientsin "Dagun-bao" and the "Manchow-bo," a "declaration" of 240 Communists headed by Cho En lai, to the effect that they do not agree with the foreign policy of the Chinese Communist Party, that they are against the creation of a Red Army and Soviet Government in China, that they are enemies of the U.S.S.R. and therefore openly declare that they are leaving the Chinese Communist Party and joining the ranks of the Kuomintang. Yet, in actual fact, Comrade Cho En lai is at present a member of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, and one of the most prominent leaders of the workers' and peasants' red army and of the Chinese Soviets. He is one of the leading members of the central Soviet Government in China. At present, Cho En lai at the head of the red army is giving sufficiently eloquent proof of his loyalty to the Chinese Communist Party and the Soviet revolution. The declaration published by the Kuomintang is the foullest form of provocation, the aim of which is to sow suspicions and pessimism in the ranks of the Chinese Communist Party.

The second case was on January 13, 1933, when in the Shanghai Kuomintang newspaper, "Sin Tsin-bao," a statement of one of the most prominent trade union workers was published, which contained sharp criticism of the policy of the Chinese Communist Party and a declaration to the effect that Sui Bin-rin had gone over to the side of the Kuomintang. Comrade Sui Bin-rin was one of the most prominent trade union workers. He was arrested by the authorities in the International Settlement in Shanghai on April 29, 1930, handed over by the English police to the Chinese authorities, and shot in May, 1931, by the Kuomintang butchers. Almost two years have passed since this most loyal revolutionary and Communist, Sui Bin-rin, was shot, and yet now the Kuomintang hangmen are trying to revile the memory of a most devoted revolutionary by publishing statements two years after Comrade Sui Bin-rin had given his life for the cause of Communism, for the cause of victory for the Chinese revolution.

The third case was on November 19, 1932, in the "China Weekly Review" and in the central organ of the Kuomintang, the "Chunan Chi-bao," where we find published an appeal by Yu-fei, as a member of the Communist Party of China, which contained the foullest calumny of Marxism-Leninism, the Chinese Communist Party, the Red Army, the Chinese Soviets, the Comintern, the U.S.S.R., the C.P.S.U. and especially Comrade Stalin. The newspapers published this statement as the declaration of one of the leaders of the Chinese Communist Party and the red trade unions, Yu-fei. Actually, Yu-fei was excluded more than two years ago from the ranks of the Chinese Communist Party and the red trade unions, for counter-revolutionary crimes, for spying and strike-breaking during the strike movement. Yu-fei has been serving in the ranks of the Kuomintang police for over a year, as a paid agent of the Kuomintang secret police; yet the Kuomintang is now publishing declarations made by this paid agent of the secret police,

as though he were still a member of the Chinese Communist Party and one of its leaders.

The fourth case was on February 24th, 1933, in the Kuomintang newspaper "Sin bin-bao," when the declaration of a certain Sun Tsu-min was published concerning his resignation from the Chinese Communist Party and voluntary transfer to the side of the Kuomintang; moreover, this declaration is printed in the name of Sun Tsu-min as a member of the Central Cimmittee of the Chinese Communist Party. Actually, there has never been a Sun Tsu-min on the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party since its inception. Thus the Kuomintang is publishing the declaration of a non-existent member of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, just as previously it published false declarations alleged to have been written by Communists who had fallen victims at the hands of its own butchers. It is therefore understandable that after the arrest of the Secretary of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, Comrade San Chu-fan, who was immediately shot by the Kuomintang butchers, the Kuomintang organs spread calumnies in just the same way to the effect that before his heroic death San Chu-fan renounced his Communist convictions. The Kuomintang did not hesitate to revile the memory of a great and loyal Communist-revolutionary, who was murdered by Kuomintang butchers.

This series of provocations is augmented by the fact that in the foreign press published in China, and also in Chinese newspapers, information has been published to the effect that Huan-pin, one of the most prominent workers in the Chinese trade union movement and a member of the presidium of the Anti-Imperialist League, has also declared that he is leaving the Communist Party ranks and joining the Kuomintang. It is known that in reply to the innumerable protests on the part of the Anti-Imperialist League, the trade union organisations and the best representatives of the intelligentsia, the Nanking government, the Chinese Ambassador in London, and Chinese representatives in Geneva, in Paris, and in Moscow have made statements to the effect that Huan-pin was let free on January 24th, 1933. We know that the Reuter agency published, at the same time, a statement by Huan-pin against Communism and in support of the Kuomintang. In actual fact, the Kuomintang authorities stubbornly refuse to grant the many demands put forward by the representatives of anti-imperialist organisations for an interview with Huan-pin. In actual fact, according to all information to hand, Huan-pin is still incarcerated in a special prison attached to the Central Committee of the Kuomintang in Nanking, where he is still suffering untold tortures. In actual fact we have information to the effect that Huan-pin was seriously ill in prison, and more than once tried to commit suicide. In actual fact there are not the slightest data, not the slightest confirmation, of the truth of the statement of Huan-pin. On the contrary, everything goes to prove that it is just another case of Kuomintang provocation.

The Chinese Communist Party, the anti-imperialist and revolutionary organisations and trade unions in China, are carrying on a campaign to unmask these lies and to fight against the new method of criminal provocation adopted by the Kuomintang. They have pilloried the Kuomintang, which does not hesitate to use this unprecedentedly low method of provocation. The international revolutionary working-class movement, honest anti-imperialist fighters, sincere leaders of the trade union movement and representatives from among the intelligentsia, will, undoubtedly, support the Chinese revolutionaries in this struggle. The Kuomintang has just treacherously handed over the Jehol province to Japanese imperialism. The Kuomintang has once more proved that it is waging war, and wants to wage war, only against the Chinese people, against the Chinese toilers. The Kuomintang has once more shown that it is the government of national disgrace and national treason, and has pilloried itself in the eyes of public opinion throughout the world by its new, most vile, method of provocation.

MARX AND ENGELS ON IRELAND

K. Antonova.

THE rising tide of the national movement in Ireland against British imperialism has been growing stronger and stronger of late.

De Valera was able to make use of the revolutionary aspirations of the urban and rural toilers, after having come to power in February, 1932, through the votes of the broad masses, who believed in his promises to fight against the English bourgeoisie.

As we know, under pressure from the toiling masses, De Valera did put through certain half-measures in this direction—abolition of the oath of allegiance to the British king, the refusal to pay land annuities to the British treasury, tariffs against English goods, etc. But even these measures evoked the greatest indignation among all the bourgeois parties in England, from the Conservatives to the Labourites. The British Government hastened to introduce prohibitive tariffs on almost all articles exported by Ireland, thus virtually destroying all Irish trade with England. In Ireland itself the English bourgeoisie is doing its utmost to support and arm its agent, Cosgrave, the representative of the rich Irish bourgeoisie, leisured class, rich peasants and big cattle-breeders, who are closely linked up with English circles. The question of domination in Ireland is of the greatest importance for the English imperialists.

Ireland occupies an immeasurably bigger place, in the system of exploitation created by British imperialism, than one might imagine at first glance when considering the relative importance of this comparatively small country. This is because Ireland is not only one of the numerous appendages, one of the semi-colonies, which supply England with agrarian products and raw materials, but because it also plays an especially important rôle on account of its strategic significance.

Ireland is the most vulnerable part of the British Empire, and a mass uprising in Ireland, supported by the working class of England and other European countries, could deal a devastating blow against English imperialism.

Nor should it be forgotten that the further development of the struggle for Irish independence will, without doubt, afford a fresh incentive to the development of the movement for national emancipation in India, in Egypt and in other British colonies and semi-colonies.

But the significance of the revolutionary movement in Ireland from the viewpoint of the class struggle of the proletariat in the capitalist countries of Europe does not end here. It should not be forgotten that the spread of revolutionary anti-imperialist struggles in Ireland, situated as it is in the centre of the capitalist world, will have a direct revolutionising influence upon the toiling masses of the European continent. It was just this that Lenin had in mind, when he wrote:

> "The struggle of the oppressed nations *in Europe*, which is capable of leading up to revolts and street fighting, to breaking down the iron discipline of the troops, and to martial law—this struggle will do immeasurably more to 'sharpen the revolutionary crisis in Europe,' than a much more widespread uprising in the distant colonies. A blow of equal force inflicted upon the government of the English imperialist bourgeoisie by an uprising in Ireland is a hundred times more significant, politically, than if it were in Asia or Africa."
>
> (Lenin: *Results of the Discussion on Self-Determination, Collected Works,* Vol. XIX., p. 270. Third Russian Edition.)

The Irish question and the development of the revolutionary movement in Ireland therefore acquires a great importance. And from this point of view it seems politically important to make a study of all that the founders of Marxism wrote, in their time, about Ireland.

Marx and Engels considered the national question in Ireland to be of enormous importance. Not only did they follow the Irish national movement, but they rendered it practical assistance. On November 2, 1867, in a letter to Engels, Marx wrote that he had "tried by all possible means to call forth a demonstration of English workers in favour of the Fenians.[1] (Fenianism: the revolutionary national movement of the Irish petty bourgeoisie in the second half of the nineteenth century, directed against British rule.) A month later Marx wrote again: "Yesterday I delivered a report for one hour and a half on Ireland in our German Labour League (but there were three other German workers' associations represented there, too, altogether about 100 persons)."[2]

The brutal manner in which the British government dealt with the imprisoned Irish republican Fenians roused Marx to great indignation. In the name of the international he sent a protest to the British Foreign Office, wrote an article in

[1] *Collected Works* of Marx and Engels, Vol. XXIII., p. 484. Russian Edition.

[2] Marx to Engels, December 17, 1867. *Collected Works,* Vol. XXIII., p. 488. Russian Edition.

the *L'International*, the Belgian organ of the International, and gave his daughter, Jenny, material for articles on the Irish question, which were published in the French newspaper, *La Marseillaise*. These articles, written under the direct guidance of Marx and Engels, were reprinted throughout the entire continental press and even in English bourgeois newspapers. In England and Ireland a campaign was organised to get the imprisoned Fenians released from prison.

Marx considered it absolutely essential for the International Workingmen's Association to demonstrate its approval and support to the national movement of the Fenians. He put two questions on the Agenda of one of the sessions of the International Council: "1. The conduct of the British Ministry in the question of Irish amnesties. 2. The position of the English working class with regard to the Irish question."[3]

After delivering his report for almost one hour and a half on this question, Marx submitted his famous resolution:

> "Resolved: That in Mr. Gladstone's answer to the demands of the Irish for the release of the imprisoned Irish patriots, which answer is contained in his letter to Mr. O'Shea, etc., Mr. Gladstone has deliberately insulted the Irish people; that he associates political amnesty with conditions which are equally insulting, both to the victims of the arbitrary act and to the nation to which they belong; despite the responsible post he holds, he publicly and with enthusiasm welcomes the uprising of the American slaveowners, yet at the same time, in reference to the Irish people, he preaches the doctrine of passive submission; that his whole conduct on the question of Irish amnesty is really and truly the product of that same 'Aggressive policy,' the unmasking of which at one time made it possible for Mr. Gladstone to remove his Tory rivals from office; that *the general council of the International Workingmen's Association* is filled with admiration for the courage, the resolution and the magnanimity with which the Irish people is carrying on its struggle for amnesty; that the present resolution be communicated to all sections of the International Workingmen's Association and to all affiliated labour organisations in Europe and America."[4]

The question of Ireland's right to self-determination was one of the causes for the split between the First International and the English trade union bureaucrats (the Applegarth and Odgers group) and their newspaper, *The Beehive*. Marx's resolution on the attitude to the Fenians' struggle for amnesty was diametrically opposed to the policy of the English trade union bureaucrats. The latter had to decide as to whether they would break once and for all with their political patrons, the bourgeoisie, or whether they would break with the International Workingmen's Association.

Both of these trade unionist "leaders" tried to avoid a straight answer.

"Applegarth sat next to me," wrote Marx to Engels in a letter of November 26, 1869, "and therefore did not dare to speak against the resolution; he said, true with a quaking heart, that he was more for than against. Odgers said that if the vote were put at once, then he would be compelled to vote for the resolution."[5]

"The resolution was passed unanimously, despite Odgers' continual verbal amendments."[6]

We may mention, in passing, that the split itself occurred later, on the question of the attitude of the workers to the Paris Commune.

But the First International severed its connection with *The Beehive* somewhat earlier.

> "Last Tuesday the Central Council unanimously accepted my proposal, seconded by Muddershead, to break off our connection with *The Beehive* and to *publish* this decision. I exposed the paper as one which had sold itself to the bourgeoisie (S. Morley, etc.), referring especially to its attitude on our Irish resolution, discussions, etc."[7] (The newspaper had remained silent on these points.)

The Irish question served as a touchstone also for the Bakuninists. The latter looked upon the Fenians as bourgeois nationalists and considered it an "act of stupidity" on the part of Marx to bring in a resolution in favour of the Fenians.

In the confidential report given by the International Workingmen's Association to the Brunswick Committee, Marx gave a detailed exposition of his point of view on the Irish question:

> "If England is the stronghold of European landlordism and capitalism, then Ireland is the only point from which it is possible to deal a blow at official England . . . The viewpoint of the International Workingmen's Association on the Irish question is very clear. Its first task is to *hurry on the social revolution in*

[3] Marx to Engels, November 12, 1869. *Collected Works*, Vol. XXIV., p. 247. Russian Edition.

[4] Marx to Engels, November 18, 1869. *Collected Works*, Vol. XXIV., p. 251. Russian Edition.

[5] Marx to Engels, *Collected Works*, Vol. XXIV., p. 261. Russian Edition.

[6] Marx to Engels, December 4, 1869. *Collected Works*, Vol. XXIV., p. 264. Russian Edition.

[7] Marx to Engels, April 28, 1870. *Collected Works*, Vol. XXIV., p. 326. Russian Edition.

England. In order to do this, a decisive blow must be struck in Ireland."[8]

Thus, Marx considered the rôle of Ireland for the proletarian revolution in Europe to be a very important one. What state was Ireland in, and what problems confronted it, during the lifetime of Marx and Engels?

Here is what the founders of Marxism wrote about the economic position of Ireland at the time:

"The more thoroughly I study the question, the clearer does it become for me that the English invasion deprived Ireland of any chance to develop and threw her back hundreds of years, and that, all at one stroke, at the beginning of the twelfth century . . ."[9] "At present Ireland is merely an agricultural district of England, divided from the latter by a broad channel and providing her with bread, wool, cattle and recruits for her industry and her army."[10] English industry could not have developed so rapidly had England not found in the vast, impoverished population of Ireland a reserve always ready to serve its purpose."[11]

Here, in a few vivid sentences we have quoted, Marx and Engels draw a picture of the *consequences of the English conquest*—poverty, backwardness, and the agrarian character of the country.

"The unheard-of poverty and torment of the Irish peasants is one of the most instructive examples of the lengths to which the landlords and liberal bourgeoisie of a 'ruling' nation will go. The 'brilliant economic development' and 'prosperity' of trade and industry in England are to a large extent the result of exploits against the Irish peasantry which remind us of the Russian feudal lord, Saltychikh.

"England 'prospered,' Ireland faded away and remained an undeveloped, half-savage, purely agricultural country, a country of pauper peasant tenants."[12]

Despite the radical changes of recent times (the era of pre-monopolist capital having given way to the era of imperialism, the era of proletarian, socialist revolutions, and the triumph of socialism in the U.S.S.R.), Ireland to-day differs only a little from the Ireland of the time of Marx. As before, it is a backward country; as before, Ireland is oppressed by the English imperialists. Just as before, the national movement is linked up with the agrarian movement. Nevertheless, certain changes have taken place in the agrarian conditions in Ireland.

Agrarian development in Ireland during the last century may be divided into three periods. The first (from 1801-1846) was a period of feudal relations, established between the English landlord and his Irish tenant. A system of small and "parcel" land holdings predominated. The second period (1846-1868) was marked by the forced development of bourgeois relations in Irish agriculture, this finding its expression in the concentration of land in the hands of the landlords, in enclosures, mass evictions of tenants, and in the conversion of their land into pasture for cattle-breeding. This was the period of famine and mass emigration overseas.

In other words, the same process was taking place in Ireland as had commenced in England in the sixteenth and at the beginning of the eighteenth century. The federal landlords either became capitalists, or lost their lands as a result of the law concerning mortgaged estates, in which case their property fell into the hands of the large farmers, the middlemen, as they were called. The latter frequently rented big stretches of land and cleared the small tenants off even more radically than did the landlords. Here, as in England, a two-fold process was going on: on the one hand, the landlords themselves adopted capitalist methods of exploitation; and on the other hand, in place of the old feudal lords, there grew up a class of new capitalist farmer-tenants and landowners. Finally, there was the third period (its last stage has not reached its culmination yet), the period of bourgeois reforms evoked by constant revolutionary upheavals, the period of land-purchase, the period when the landlords' estates were being parcelled out, when large, medium-sized and small farms grew up and developed, this process being accompanied by an increased differentiation among the peasantry and increased emigration of the poor peasants. Large landed property ceased to be "identical with England's ownership of Ireland,"[13] as it had been in Marx's time.

However, the bourgeois revolution in agriculture, even in the third period, did not reach its final culmination, for exploitation of the Irish peasants by the English landlords, who were subsequently displaced by the *rentiers* and bourgeoisie, was not destroyed altogether. Up to quite recently the Irish peasants have had to pay annuities to the extent of three million pounds sterling to the English landlords and bourgeoisie, this payment being virtually the price at which

[8]Marx to Kugelmann, March 28, 1870. P. 221. Russian Edition.

[9]Engels to Marx, January 19, 1870. *Collected Works*, Vol. XXIV., p. 280. Russian Edition.

[10]Marx, *Capital*.

[11]Engels: *Conditions of the Working Class in England in 1844*. Allen and Unwin, p. 90.

[12]Lenin. *English Liberals and Ireland, Collected Works*, Vol. XVII., p. 244. Russian Edition.

[13]Marx to Kugelmann, October 11, 1867.

they purchase their own land. Since 1932, De Valera has ceased to pay annuities to the British treasury, although he has agreed to international arbitration.

The tasks which the bourgeois-democratic revolution in Ireland has set itself — to complete the agrarian revolution and to bring about the complete national emancipation and union of Ireland—are tasks which can only be accomplished by the coming proletarian revolution in Ireland.

Marx and Engels studied Ireland from the end of the first period to the beginning of the third. They were the first to observe the change in the policy of England on the Irish land question. In the third volume of *Capital* Marx gives the following description of the agrarian relations in Ireland during the *first* period of England's policy on the agrarian question:

"We are not now speaking of conditions, in which ground rent, the form of landed property adapted to the capitalist mode of production, formally exists without the capitalist mode of production itself, so that the tenant is not an industrial capitalist, nor the mode of his management a capitalist one. Such is the case in Ireland. The tenant is here generally a small farmer. What he pays to the landlord in the shape of rent absorbs frequently not merely a part of his profit, that is, of his own surplus labour, to which he is entitled as the possessor of his own instruments of production, but also a part of his normal wages which he would receive under different conditions for the same amount of labour. Besides, the landlord, who does not do anything for the improvement of the soil, also expropriates him from his small capital, which he incorporates for the greater part in the soil by his own labour, just as a usurer would do under similar circumstances. Only the usurer would at least risk his own capital in the operation. This continual robbery is the centre of the disputes over the Irish Land Bill, which has for its principal aim to compel the landlord, when giving notice to his tenant to vacate, should pay him an indemnity for the improvements made by him in the soil, or for the capital incorporated by him in the land. Palmerston used to meet this demand with the cynical answer: The House of Commons is a house of landlords."[14]

In his article, *Irish Tenant Rights*, Marx shows that the English bourgeoisie established such a state of things in Ireland as enabled a small caste of landlords to plunder the vast peasant population with impunity. The only means of radically solving the agrarian question in Ireland, argues Marx, is to expropriate the landlords and nationalise the land.

On the *second* period of the agrarian question in Ireland, Marx and Engels wrote:

"The 'Irish quarter'[15] in Parliament and the Irish clergy, apparently, are equally unaware of the fact that the Anglo-Saxon revolution is bringing about a radical change in Irish society, behind their backs. This revolution consists in the fact that the *Irish agricultural system is giving way to the English, that the system of small tenants is giving way to large* —just as the old landowners are being displaced by the *new capitalists.*"[16]

"There is nothing more absurd than to confuse the barbarous acts of Elizabeth or Cromwell who wanted to crowd out the Irish with the help of English colonists (in the Roman sense of the word) with the present system that wants to crowd out the Irish with the help of sheep, pigs and bulls. The 1801-46 system (evictions took place during this period only in exceptional cases, especially in Leinster, where the land is particularly well-suited for cattle-breeding) with its rack-rents and middlemen, broke down in 1846. The repeal of the Corn Laws, partially brought about in consequence of the Irish famine, or at any rate brought in earlier as a result of it, deprived Ireland of the *monopoly* she had as England's supplier of grain in normal times. Wool and meat became the slogans, *i.e.*, the conversion of arable lands into pasture. Hence the tendency towards the systematical merging together of estates. The law concerning mortgaged estates, which converted a vast number of wealthy middlemen into landowners, hastened on this process (of clearing the estates of Ireland)—and here lies the whole meaning of English rule in Ireland. It seems that the stupid British government in London knows nothing about the enormous change that has taken place since 1846. But the Irish know. Beginning with the Meager proclamation in 1848, right up to the *election address of Henessy* (theorist and supporter of Urquhart —1866), the Irish have been expressing their opinion on this point in the clearest and most forceful manner."[17]

However, although Engels noted that the same processes were taking place in Ireland as in England—the concentration of the lands of the

[14] *Capital*, Vol. III., page 734.

[15] "Irish quarter"—Marx is referring to the Irish members of the English Parliament.

[16] *Ireland's Revenge*, Marx' and Engels' Collected Works, Vol. XI., p. 211. Russian Edition, 1924.

[17] Marx's letter to Engels, 30 November, 1867. *Collected Works*, Vol. XXIII., pages 279-280. Russian Edition.

large landowners and the ruination of the tenants —he nevertheless ridiculed the bourgeois economists who, like De Laverne, considered that this was the only path of development open to Ireland. "Providence has decreed that Ireland should be a country of pasture-land, and the prophet Leon De Laverne has demonstrated this *ergo pereat* (and consequently—let the Irish people be ruined!)," scoffed Engels in his letter to Marx on November 17, 1869.[18]

But there was another path of development open to Ireland at that time—that of farming. The Irish peasantry gradually began to take this path. The fight for land took on more embittered forms, affecting ever broader strata of the peasantry. However, the national and agrarian movement, led by the Irish nationalist bourgeoisie, was suppressed by the English bourgeoisie. The concessions granted by the English government were miserable and miserly; they were far from satisfying the demands of the peasantry and did nothing to solve the agrarian question.

The first reform of the British government in this direction was Gladstone's Land Bill, which did very little to stabilise land tenancy (previously the landlord could throw the tenant off his land, when he wanted to), and did nothing at all to stop the rise in land rent. On February 17, 1870, Marx wrote to Engels as follows:

> "So the Gladstone mountain has been prosperously delivered of its Irish mouse. I really do not know what the Tories can have against this law, which pays so much heed to the Irish landlords and which, in the last resort, transfers the care of their interests to the skilled hands of the Irish lawyers. And yet even this feeble limitation of the right to evict tenants will lead to a curtailment of the excessive overpopulation and will stop the conversion of arable land into pasture. But it is a droll thing indeed if honest Gladstone thinks to finish once for all with the Irish question on the basis of these new prospects for a prolonged development of this process."[19]
>
> "The passage which follows is enough to make one recognise that all this long land bill drafted by the unctuous Gladstone is absolute rubbish. . . ."[20]
>
> "But it is a question of throwing dust in the eyes of the public; it must appear that something is being done for Ireland, and so the law for regulating the land question (the land bill) is proclaimed with great to-do. But this is all deceit, its ultimate aim being to inspire respect in Europe, to allure the Irish judges and lawyers with the prospect of innumerable cases in court between the landlords and farmers, to win over the landlords by promising them financial subsidies from the state, and to attract the more wealthy farmers with certain half-concessions."[21]

This is Marx's opinion about Gladstone's bourgeois agrarian reform, which opened up the way for several similar reforms, with which the English bourgeoisie tried to solve the Irish question. But even these miserable concessions were only wrung from the government at the cost of peasant uprisings, at the cost of many sacrifices on the part of those who dared to rise up against the landlords and the British government which backed them.

"This is the result of shooting!" wrote Engels about the next reform in 1882,[22] explaining the new agrarian legislation and its "dock-tailed" character by the fact that "the Tories . . . want to save all that can still be saved."

That Marx and Engels were right in considering the reforms quite worthless and incapable of solving the Irish question is proved by the fact that this reform remained in force for half a century, while the Irish question remains unsolved to this day. Lenin, half a century later, gave the same estimate of this reform:

> "However much the 'enlightened and liberal' bourgeoisie of England may have wanted to perpetuate the enslavement of Ireland and its poverty, the reforms were nevertheless inevitably approaching, the more so since the revolutionary outbursts of the Irish people in their struggle for freedom and land became more and more menacing. In 1861 the Irish revolutionary organisation of the *Fenians* was formed. Those Irish who had settled in America did their utmost to help this organisation.
>
> "From 1868, after the ministry of Gladstone, the hero of the liberal bourgeois and blockheaded philistines, there began an *epoch of reforms* in Ireland, an epoch which has successfully continued to the present time, *i.e.*, for almost half a century. Oh, the wise statesmen of the liberal bourgeoisie know how to 'hasten slowly' with their reforms."[23]

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[18] *Collected Works*, Vol. XXIII., p. 249. Russian Edition.

[19] *Collected Works*, Vol. XXIV., p. 294. Russian Edition.

[20] Engels to Marx, March 13, 1870. *Collected Works*, Vol. XXIV., p. 304. Russian Edition.

[21] Marx: *The British Government and the Imprisoned Fenians*. Manuscript.

[22] Engels to Bernstein, May 3, 1882. Marx and Engels Archives, Vol. I., p. 315. Russian Edition.

[23] Lenin: *The English Liberals and Ireland*. *Collected Works*, Vol. XVIII., p. 244. Russian Edition.

As we know, the result of the many reforms and prolonged struggle was that the estates of the English landlords were purchased at a high price. The big Irish bourgeoisie came to power, and the national and peasant struggle is now developing on a somewhat different basis.

Lenin characterised this change in the alignment of class forces in the following words:

"Now the Irish nationalists (*i.e.*, the Irish bourgeoisie) have conquered: they are purchasing their lands from the English landlords; they are being given national home rule (the famous home rule around which there was such a long, stubborn fight between Ireland and England); they will be free to rule 'their own' lands, together with 'their own' Irish priests."[24]

The working elements in town and country in Ireland are now confronted with the task of struggling not only against the national oppression of capitalist England, but also against "their own" Irish priests, rich peasants and capitalists. However, and this should be especially emphasised, the national struggle in Ireland still directly affects questions of land annuities, and therefore, though the importance of the proletariat has greatly increased since Marx's time, *the driving force of the national struggle,* together with the proletariat and under its leadership, is still represented by the peasantry.

Since "big landed property" in Ireland was "identical with English ownership of Ireland," *"the agrarian movement in Ireland has taken on a national character, and has become linked up with the struggle for national emancipation.* Comrade Stalin has given an exhaustive characterisation of this state of affairs:

"The content of the national movement, of course, cannot be everywhere the same; it is entirely determined by the diverse requirements which the movement presents. In Ireland the movement has an agrarian character . . . The strength of the national movement is determined by the degree to which the broad strata of the nation, the proletariat and the peasantry, take part in it. As for the peasantry, its participation in the national movement depends primarily upon the nature of the repressions. If these repressions concern questions of 'land,' as was the case in Ireland, then the broad masses of the peasantry will immediately line up under the banner of the national movement."[25]

In his letter to Bernstein in June, 1882,[26] Engels gives a detail analysis of the connection between the peasant movement against the landlords and the movement of the petty bourgeoisie for freeing Ireland from the yoke of the English bourgeoisie. Here are a few excerpts:

"There are two tendencies in the Irish movement. The first is primordial, it is *agrarian;* from the brigandage, organised and supported by the peasants, by the chiefs of clans and big catholic landlords who had been expropriated by the English . . . it gradually developed and turned into a form of spontaneous resistance, organised in the various localities and provinces, on the part of the peasants against the English landowers who had come to their country . . . This form of resistance cannot be destroyed, the government can do nothing with it, it will disappear only with the causes that brought it forth. But by nature it is *local, scattered,* and can never take on the common form of *political* struggle.

"Soon after the union (1800) there began some *liberal national* opposition on the part of the town population, which, as is usually the case in all peasant countries where there are only small towns (for example, in Denmark), found its natural leaders among the *lawyers.* These, in their turn, have need of the peasants. Therefore, they had to devise slogans which would be popular among the peasantry." "Ireland is still a *sacra insula* (sacred isle), whose sufferings must on no account be confused with the vulgar class struggle of the rest of the sinful world. Undoubtedly this is often enough genuine monomania on the part of certain people, but just as undoubtedly it is often the conscious calculated tactic of leaders who wish to maintain their sway over the peasantry. Added to this is the fact that a peasant nation is always compelled to choose its literary representatives from among the urban bourgeoisie and its ideologists . . . For these gentry, all labour movements are pure heresy, and the Irish peasant must not know that the socialist workers are their only allies in Europe."[27]

The whole difficulty in the Irish struggle for independence up to now has been the fact that it was not led by the working class, but by the bourgeoisie, who betray the national movement for small, partial concessions; this is why the struggle for independence met with defeat. Engels in his time wrote about the corrupt

[24]Lenin: *The Class War in Dublin. Collected Works,* Vol XVI., p. 578. Russian Edition.

[25]Stalin. *Marxism and the National Question.* Russian Edition.

[26]Marx' and Engels' Archives, Vol. I., p. 315-6).

[27]Engels to Marx, December 9, 1869. *Collected Works,* Vol. XXIV., p. 266. Russian Edition.

"leaders" of this movement: "It never does to praise an Irish politician or to make common cause with him before his death,"[28] and he gave an example which clearly shows the degree of corruption which the leaders of the Irish national movement had reached:

"At the time of the union (with Ireland), which cost England 1,000,000 pounds sterling in bribes, one of those who had been bribed was reproached with the words: 'You have sold your country.' He replied: 'Of course I did, and it's damned glad I am that I had a country to sell.' "

Now, when De Valera has temporarily succeeded in deceiving a section of the Irish working class and peasantry and has gained control of the leadership of the national movement, when he is seeking a compromise with England and the most important task of the newly-formed Communist Party of Ireland is to unmask the treacherous policy of De Valera, these examples given by Marx and Engels and the estimate which they gave of the leaders of the movement attain an especial topical interest. Cannot we apply to-day to De Valera the words which Engels used in speaking of O'Connell in his time?

"He cannot even put through the miserable abolition of the union—of course, only because he is not serious about it, because he abuses the confidence of the exhausted and oppressed Irish people in order to put a spoke between the wheels of the Tory ministers and return his moderate friends to power."[29]

While expressing their profound contempt for the leaders, Marx and Engels were filled with admiration for the heroism of the peasantry, who bore all the burden of the national struggle on their shoulders. Marx even wrote that "if the English workers fail to follow the example of the Tipperary peasants, then things will go ill with them."[30]

Marx considered that the most important factor in the Irish movement was when the movement began to free itself from the influence of bourgeois leaders and when the class struggle began in the village. In a letter to Engels he wrote:

"As for the *Irish movement* of to-day, there are three important points:

"1. Opposition to lawyers and trading politicians and blarneys.

"2. Opposition to the leadership of the priests, these noble gentlemen who are traitors to-day just as they were in the time of O'Connell and in the period from 1789 to 1800.

"3. The fact that the *agricultural labourer class* has come out against the farmer class at recent meetings (cf. similar happenings from 1795 to 1800)."[31]

As regards the aims of the national struggle, Marx wrote that the struggle should be for self-government and independence from England and for an agrarian revolution.

To-day Ireland has self-government and part of it (the Irish Free State) even enjoys a certain amount of independence. This, however, does not by any means remove the fact of national oppression. In connection with this the most important point to be emphasised is that the agrarian revolution in Ireland has not been completed and the peasantry are still oppressed by the severe burden of annuity for the land they have purchased. The revolution in Ireland is also beginning to be confronted with the task of solving the agrarian question and bringing about the national emancipation of Ireland.

The proletariat, and not the national petty-bourgeoisie, is now the leader of the revolutionary movement. Lenin observed some time ago that "this country, oppressed by a double and treble national yoke, is becoming converted into a country with an organised army of proletarians."[32] The task which confronts the Irish proletariat is that of organising union under the leadership of the Communist Party, in order to head the national peasant movement and develop a struggle not only against the British imperialists but also against "its own" capitalists at home. The English proletariat should help the Irish workers and peasants to obtain complete emancipation, since the Irish question is of great significance for the proletarian revolution in Europe and above all in England itself.

Marx considered it essential that Ireland should be separated from England in the interests both of the Irish and of the English proletariat, and he always linked up the question of Irish independence with the question of proletarian revolution in England. "Reaction in England" always "relied upon the enslavement of Ireland."

"It can be seen from the example of Irish history what a misfortune it is for one people to enslave another. All England's shameful acts trace their origin to the Irish Pale (the name given to the English section of Ireland since 1170) . . . It seems to me to be beyond all doubt that affairs in England would take a

[28] Engels to Bernstein, Marx-Engels Archives, Vol. I., p. 317. Russian Edition.

[29] Engels. Letters from London. *Collected Works*, Vol. II., p. 292. Russian Edition.

[30] Engels to Marx, November 20. 1869. *Collected Works*. Vol. XXIV., p. 263.

[31] Marx to Engels, December 10, 1869. *Collected Works*, Vol. XXIV., p. 271. Russian Edition.

[32] Lenin, Vol., XVI., p. 579. Russian Edition.

different turn if there were no need for military rule and for the creation of a new aristocracy in Ireland.'"[33]

In the General Council of the International, Marx defended the idea that

"quite independent of 'international' and 'humanitarian' phraseology about 'justice for Ireland'—because that must be taken for granted in the Council of the International—the *direct absolute interests* of the English working class *demand the separation of Ireland*. For a long time I thought it was possible that the Irish régime would be overthrown in consequence of the upsurge of the English working class. I always advocated this viewpoint in the *New York Tribune*. But a more profound study of the question convinced me of the contrary. The English working class *will never achieve anything*, until it has rid itself of Ireland. That is why the Irish question is of such great importance for the social movement in general.'"[34]

In his letter to Kugelmann, Marx strongly advocated the same idea that the proletarian revolution in England is impossible, or at any rate will be delayed for a long time, if the English working class does not obtain emancipation for Ireland.

"I am becoming more and more convinced—and now it is only a question of imbuing the minds of the English working class with this conviction—that the working class will never be able to take a decisive step forward in England itself until it breaks once and for all with the policy of the ruling classes on the Irish question. The English working class must not only encourage the Irish, but itself take the initiative in the matter of abolishing the union of 1801 and replacing it by a free union on a federal basis. And the English proletariat should pursue this policy not out of sympathy towards the Irish, but because it is essential from the viewpoint of its own interests. If this is not done, then the English people will remain in leading strings to the ruling classes, because it will have to act in conjunction with them against Ireland.'"[35]

Lenin in his article entitled *The Utopian Karl Marx and the Practical Rosa Luxembourg* drew attention to the importance and correctness of Marx's attitude on the question of Ireland's right to self-determination and of the responsibility of the English working class for the outcome of the struggle for independence. Taking Ireland as an example, Marx explained how the proletariat, not only that of the oppressed nation, but also, more especially, that of the oppressing nation, should raise the national question and find its solution.

"In the sixties of the last century, of course, the economic ties between Ireland and England were stronger than those which exist between Russia and Poland, the Ukraine, etc. The 'impracticability' and 'unrealisability' of Irish secession (if only because of geographical circumstances and the immense colonial might of England) was an obvious fact. Though in principle opposed to federalism, Marx approved the idea of federation in the given case, provided only that Irish emancipation take place not in the reformist way, but on revolutionary lines by force of the movement of the popular masses in Ireland, supported by the working class of England. There is not the slightest doubt that only a solution of this kind would be favourable to the interests of the proletariat and to rapid social development.

"Things turned out differently. Both the Irish people and the English proletariat turned out to be weak.

. . . "Well? Does it follow from this that Marx and Engels were 'utopians,' that they put forward 'unrealisable' national demands, that they fell a prey to the influence of the Irish nationalists—the petty-bourgeois (for the petty-bourgeois nature of the 'Fenian' movement is beyond question), and so on?

"No. Marx and Engels pursued a consistent proletarian policy on the Irish question, which really educated the masses in the spirit of 'democratism and socialism'."[36]

"For to imagine that the social revolution is conceivable without an uprising of small nations in the colonies and in Europe, without revolutionary outbursts on the part of sections of the petty bourgeoisie with *all their prejudices*, without a movement of non-class-conscious proletarian and semi-proletarian masses against landlord, clerical, monarchist and national oppression, etc.,—to imagine this means to repudiate the social revolution."[37]

The Irish question is closely linked up with the question of the social revolution in Europe as a whole and the proletarian revolution in England in particular. It is closely connected with the task of overcoming opportunism in the ranks of the English Labour movement. The upper strata of the English proletariat, the so-called aristocracy of Labour, is the basis of this opportunism. The English Labour Party, whose function is to convey bourgeois ideology to the working masses,

[33] Marx's letter to Engels, December 10, 1869. *Collected Works*, Vol. XXIV., p. 270. Russian Edition.

[34] Marx to Engels, December 10, 1869.

[35] Marx's letter to Kugelmann, November 29, 1869.

[36] Lenin. *Collected Works*. Vol. XVII., pp. 463-464.

[37] Lenin. *Collected Works*. Vol. XIX., pp. 268-269.

stands sentry over the interests of its master, the bourgeoisie; it justifies and supports all methods of imperialist exploitation. Whereas at the beginning of their political career the Labourites concealed their purely imperialist aims behind the slogan of "the right of complete self-determination for the colonies within the confines of the British Empire," they have now given up even this show of demagogy. They justify their policy of brutal suppression of the national movement in the colonies by alleging that the link between England and her colonies is advantageous to both sides. England, they say, is the guardian of nations which are on a lower level of development; England civilised them.

Ireland is a graphic example of the "civilising" rôle of British imperialism in the colonies. The "guardianship" of the English bourgeoisie over Ireland threw back the development of the latter country a hundred years, ruined Irish industry and put a brake on its further development, and kept Ireland in the position of England's agrarian appendage. And the English bourgeoisie were so successful in "civilising" Ireland that "Ireland was saved from out-and-out ruin—from being wiped out to the last man—by the fact that part of the population emigrated to America."

Thomas, the Colonial Minister in the present Government, is a typical leader of the English Labour Party. When De Valera came to power, Thomas immediately declared that there could be no question of Irish independence. He declared that he would defend the "inviolability of treaties" "with all the power at his disposal." The "treaties" in question were the servile conditions to which Ireland was pinned down in 1921 under the threat of "an immediate and awful war" (the words once used by Lord Beaconsfield); they meant that Ireland was to be partitioned and that she was to pay three million pounds sterling in land annuities to the English treasury. De Valera, under pressure from the masses, put the law to abolish the oath of allegiance through parliament and stopped the payment of annuities to England; but Thomas had already rushed through a tariffs bill, which was absolutely ruinous for Irish trade. Moreover, he declared that there would be no concessions made on the part of the British Government.

> "We have reached the limit . . . I consider that the prosperity of the Irish Free State is linked up with the prosperity of our own country, and it is in the best interests of both countries that they should be united within the confines of the British Empire. I consider that the British Empire will still play its part as a collaboration of peoples under the slogan of justice and honest respect of other people's rights."

This speech of Thomas the Labourite, the arrant imperialist and Colonial Minister in the Conservative Government, contains the whole essence and kernel of the Labourist policy. The Labourites have shown that when in power they are not a whit behind any other bourgeois government in their ability to deal with the movement for emancipation in the colonies, while expatiating at the same time about "honest respect of other people's rights" on the part of British imperialism.

Marx and Engels, taking Ireland as an example, showed how the national problem ought to be faced. They demanded that the English working class afford all possible support to the Irish national movement, that it make the victory of Ireland its own task, that it see this thing through in its own interests. The only party which has really pursued the policy bequeathed by Marx regarding the duty of the proletariat of the oppressing nation to do all in its power to fight for the emancipation of the oppressed nation, is the Communist Party.

In its struggle against national oppression in Ireland, the Communist Party takes as its starting point the fact that Ireland has always been, and still virtually remains, a semi-colony, despite the partial concessions of British imperialism. The so-called "independence" of part of Ireland (the "Irish Free State") has satisfied no one but the big Irish bourgeoisie, which came into power as a result of it. It did not solve the agrarian question. Consequently the struggle for national emancipation is closely interwoven with the struggle for the land. The peasants are still forced to pay heavy annuities for the land which they purchased from the landlords.

> "Only in the twentieth century did the Irish peasant begin to change from a tenant into a free owner of the land, but the liberal gentlemen pinned him down to *purchasing at a 'fair' price.* He pays millions and millions in tribute and will for many years continue to pay the English landlords in return for the fact that for several centuries they robbed him and brought about constant famines. The English liberal bourgeois forced the Irish peasants to repay the landlords for this in hard cash."[39]

To this day these annuities are a heavy burden upon the Irish small and middle peasantry. De Valera has refused to pay them into the English treasury, but he continues to squeeze them out of the peasants. The question of land annuities is a very acute one in the Irish village. The working class and the peasantry in Ireland come

[38] Marx: *Parliamentary Debates on India. Collected Works.* Vol. IX., p. 718. Russian Edition.

[39] Lenin, *Collected Works.* Vol. XVII., p. 245.

under a double yoke. To the yoke of British imperialism is added the yoke of the capitalists, the yoke of finance capital. The big Irish bourgeoisie, the big cattle-breeders and rich farmers, are agents of British imperialism. The struggle against British imperialism comes up against the desperate resistance of all the large capitalst elements in the country, who are on the side of the imperialists, and consequently it becomes converted into a struggle against the capitalist system.

In England itself the working class, by supporting the struggle for national emancipation in the colonies, is thereby undermining the might of the English capitalists.

Marx and Engels emphasised this point again and again. They waged an irreconcilable struggle both against the right "deviationists" in the International who were infected with chauvinism, like Applegarth, Odgers and the paper, *The Beehive*, and against the "left" Bakuninists, who considered that the national struggle militates against the class struggle.

Later, Stalin had to explain these ideas of Marx to his comrades, who had not grasped Marx's standpoint on the national question and who repeated the mistakes of the Bakuninists:

> "There is a movement for independence in Ireland. On whose side are we, comrades? Either we are on Ireland's side, or we are on the side of the British Empire. And I ask you —and life itself asks—are we for the people which is fighting against oppression, or are we with the classes that oppress them? . . . Comrades Pyatakov and Dzerzhinsky tell us that all national movements are reactionary movements. This is not true, comrades. Is the movement in Ireland against English imperialism not a democratic movement, which aims a blow at imperialism? And ought we not to support this movement?"[40]

But at the same time Marx and Engels also fought against the bourgeois and petty-bourgeois leaders, against their betrayal of the national movement. This task of fighting for the leadership of the proletariat in the national, as well as the class, struggle, is one which now confronts the newly-formed Irish Communist Party. The deceit of De Valera, the representative of small Irish industrialists and traders, must be unmasked; the masses of workers and peasants must be torn away from the influence of the Fianna Fail and the reformist leaders of the Irish Republican Army, who are the leaders of the movement to-day. We must follow the line of Marx, for his words are fully applicable to Ireland to-day.

Only the working class of Ireland, with the Communist Party at its head, leading it in conjunction with the leading sections of the Irish peasantry, can carry the agrarian revolution to its conclusion by abolishing the land annuities and confiscating the large estates of the capitalist landowners. The Communist Party, which is now being formed, must head the movement of the masses and lead them in the struggle for the workers' and peasants' government.

[40]Stalin. Speech at the All-Russian Conference of the R.S.D.L.P., April, 1917. Russian Edition.

THE CONSTITUENT CONGRESS OF THE IRISH COMMUNIST PARTY

By SEUMAS MacKEE

(*Continued*)

Therefore, it is necessary for the Irish Communist to especially pay attention to the words of Comrade Stalin when speaking about the tasks of Communists in an oppressed nation, "the twofold task of the Communists who must diffuse among the workers the spirit of internationalism" . . . "the need for a struggle against the narrowness, the particularism of those socialists in oppressed lands who cannot see beyond the boundaries of the parish in which they were born, and *therefore fail to see the intimate connection between the movement for liberation of their own country and the proletarian movement in the country by which it is ruled*" (Our emphasis.). These profound directives of Comrade Stalin are especially applicable to the situation in Ireland where the main danger is right opportunism, especially regarding the national question; to lose sight of the main task of the Party as the struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat would inevitably result in our Party becoming the tail end of bourgeois nationalism, or sucked into the swamp of the I.R.A., and therefore losing sight of the main task of organising the proletariat as the single force which can lead the whole of the Irish masses in a consistent struggle for the unity and independence of Ireland, the revolutionary alliance of the workers and poor farmers in the struggle for socialism.

Basing itself on proletarian internationalism, and organising the proletarian struggle in this spirit, the I.C.P. must wage a bitter struggle against bourgeois

nationalism no matter under which guise it hides itself, then courageously declare that the I.C.P. leading the proletarian struggle to socialism, unites the proletariat with the working masses of the farming population, and wages the most determined struggle for the unity and independence of Ireland. This requires from the I.C.P. that it must base itself on the Leninist principle that :

"The centre of gravity of the internationalist education of the workers in oppressing countries must take the form of insisting upon the right of oppressed countries to secede and set up for themselves. Short of this, there is no internationalism. We can and should regard as an imperialist and a scoundrel every socialist in an oppressing country who fails to carry on propaganda of this kind. The right to secede is axiomatic, even though, before the coming of socialism, there may not be one case in a thousand where the right can be enforced.

"On the other hand, the socialists of a small and oppressed nation must mainly stress the second part of our general formula—the "voluntary union" of the nations. Without doing violence to his obligations as an internationalist, he may (according to circumstances), either advocate the political independence of his nation, or favour its inclusion in some neighbouring State. In all cases, however, he should fight particularism, a narrow conception of nationalism, should insist on the importance of wider issues, should favour the subordination of special interests to general interests."

The constituent Congress of the I.C.P. must examine the political and organisational mistakes and weaknesses which have been observed during the R.W.G. struggle for the foundation of the Party. Such self-criticism is necessary in order that the Irish Communists shall realise that the main danger confronting them is right opportunism. Especially in Ireland this danger expresses itself in the tendency to capitulate to national-reformism, i.e., in refusing to struggle against Fianna Fail, to win the masses for a revolutionary alliance for the joint struggle against capitalist exploitation and for national independence. The Irish Communists must recognise that because of the demagogic programme of Fianna Fail of social and national freedom, it plays the role of a social buttress for Irish capitalism among the masses. On the other hand, the right danger is also expressed in the failure to struggle against the Labour Party and trade union bureaucracy, and independently lead the struggles against the capitalist offensive in spite of the class collaboration policy of the bureaucrats, to develop the struggle against their capitalist oppressors and clean the workers' movement of these capitalist agents.

Capitulation to national-reformism. Such an opportunist slogan as "nationalisation of the railways with compensation" cannot be passed over in silence because it disarms the Party in the struggle against the Social-Fascist Labour Party and trade union bureaucracy, which has precisely the same slogan. The R.W.G. must recognise that in precisely fighting such slogans they are fighting the chief danger menacing the very formation of the Irish Communist Party, because the right danger is the greatest danger for every Communist Party. From this must inevitably arise every opportunist capitulation to capitalism, which we must most strenuously fight against.

The campaign for the Constituent Congress of the Communist Party of Ireland must be more energetically waged than hitherto. There have been waverings, hesitations, even in many issues of the "Workers' Voice," nothing has been mentioned about the foundation of the I.C.P. And in the discussion regarding the establishment of the Communist Party of Ireland, the fundamental questions of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the proletarian-farmer alliance against capitalism and the relationship to them of the national struggle, etc., have been passed over. The campaign for the establishment of the Communist Party can only be successful if it is rooted in the masses of factory workers, among the unemployed, at the Labour Exchanges, in the workers' quarters, by explaining to them that only the Communist Party, waging a stubborn struggle for the overthrow of capitalism, and defending the interests of the workers and working farmers, by a revolutionary alliance of the working-class and the working farmers, can finally free the whole of the toiling masses from capitalist oppression and poverty in the proletarian struggle for socialism.

The Irish proletariat, in alliance with the poor farmers, led by the Irish Communist Party, armed with Marxist-Leninist revolutionary ideology can organise the vanguard of the proletariat to lead the Irish working-class to the establishment of a free and independent Ireland—an Irish Workers' and Farmers' Republic.

* * *

The formation of the Irish Communist Party is of great importance internationally ; the importance of this fact is the more marked because of the millions of Irish immigrants living in Britain, the British Dominions and Colonies and the United States of America, where there are more Irish than in Ireland itself. The formation of the Irish Communist Party will deeply affect the emigrant masses and aid the Sections of the Comintern in these countries to gain recruits among them, if these Sections recognise that these immigrant Irish and their descendants still maintain a great hatred of British imperialism, and consequently are deeply interested in the struggle for the independence of Ireland. This is especially

necessary because both in Britain, America, Canada and Australia, not only the socialist but also clearly bourgeois politicians pay lip service to the national struggle for liberation in Ireland in order to maintain the vast masses in their country under bourgeois domination. Therefore it is absolutely essential to adopt a correct Marxist-Leninist attitude to the question of the struggle for liberation of Ireland from British imperialism. This will supply them with the bridge with which to encourage these Irish workers to-day, exploited by capitalism, to join the Communist Parties and fight alongside the Communist International not only against their former national oppression, but against their present capitalist exploitation.

Lenin paid great attention to the "Irish Question" (as did Marx and Engels before him) because of the great importance of the national-liberation movement in Ireland for the proletarian socialist struggle against British imperialism, and the advance of the proletarian revolution in Europe. In many articles on the Irish situation, Lenin draws many conclusions to which the Irish Communists should pay especial attention to-day because they answer many of the problems confronting the C.P. of Ireland.

Basing himself on the conclusion reached by Marx and Engels that Ireland must be separated from Britain in the interests of the proletarian revolution in Britain itself, in the advance of the European proletarian revolution, Lenin drew lessons from the class struggle in Ireland which are of the greatest importance to the Irish proletariat to-day.

Writing regarding the Dublin general strike in 1913, Lenin characterised the offensive of the Irish capitalists against the Irish workers as follows : "The nationalist Irish bourgeoisie celebrate their 'national' victory (the Irish bourgeoisie expected to secure' Home Rule at that time.—S.McK.) their 'national coming-of-age by declaring war to the death on the Irish working-class movement." (Vol. XII, Part 2, first Russian edition, page 192). It is of especial importance to heed this Leninist conclusion to-day, when the De Valera Government of national-reformists, relying on their former revolutionary nationalist reputations, lead the capitalist offensive against the proletariat under the guise of creating a new Ireland," a "new social system" in the interests of the Irish capitalist offensive on the toiling masses.

In this article, "The Irish Rebellion in 1916," Lenin stigmatises those who called it a "putsch" as "either a bitter reactionary or a doctrinaire, hopelessly incapable of imagining a social revolution as a living phenomena," (Works, Vol. XII, Part 2, first Russian edition). In the same article (pages 432-33) he draws the conclusion that 'We would really be a sorry band of revolutionists if we did not, during the great proletarian battle for Socialism, understand enough to utilise *every* movement of a nation against any isolated grievances whch are brought about by imperialism, in the interests of a broader intensification and spread of the crisis. If we were, on the one hand, to proclaim and repeat in thousands of ways that we are against any kind of national oppression, and, on the other, to stigmatise as a "putsch" the heroic rising of the most mobile and intellectual section of some class of the oppressed nations against its oppression, then, indeed, we would have reduced ourselves to the same dull level of the Kautskians."

In the present period in Ireland, which is witnessing a great advance in the anti-imperialist mood of the labouring masses of the population, the Irish Communists by a proper application of the above Leninist position can win them from the national-reformism of De Valera for the joint struggle with the proletariat, the struggle for Socialism.

NOTE.—Since this article was written, the campaign of the British agents in Ireland, including the reactionary Catholic clergy and the Cosgrave Fascist organisation, the Army Comrades Association attacked and burned the headquarters of the Revolutionary Workers' Groups in Dublin, Connolly House, on March 29th. This attack of the reactionary imperialist agents shows their fear of the growing influence of the R.W.G. in mobilising the workers for the formation of the Communist Party of Ireland.

CORRECTIONS No. 8

Page 252, column 1, article of Piatnitsky. Two lines from bottom insert :—It is known that during the World Imperialist War the Social Democratic Parties and Reformist Trade Unions supported their national bourgeoisie in every way. They voted for credits for carrying on the war, prohibited strikes, etc. When strikes against the degradation of the conditions of labour and resistance to the militarists were broken by the Trade Union officials and the Social Democratic Parties by every possible method.

Page 270, article of Shubin. First paragraph first line : 1927 instead of 1928.

Page 272, column 2, last paragraph, line 2 Delete "not"; viz., Capone *was* . . . lowered"

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